NORA AUNOR: Now super-free of any criminal record, the ex-superstar of Philippine movies leaves the LA court which had dismissed drug charges against her, with lawyer Sherwin Edelberg, aunt Belen Villamayor. *(Story on Page A7.)* NICK P. SAGMIT/CONTRIBUTOR

WORLD / A23

Britney Spears loses custody of 2 sons

NEWS / A2

Malaysia threatens to pull out peace monitors in Mindanao

NEWS / A7

4 rescued crew members recount coworkers eaten alive by sharks off Palawan

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Wednesday, October 3, 2007 ★★ 9 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 297 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

PNP chief: My calling card not meal coupon

By Alcuin Papa

HULIHIN KASI ANG MGA ABUSADO!

IT'S A CALLING CARD from Camp Crame, period. Not a flimsy "badge" to be brandished at traffic officers or parking attendants, a lifetime food-and-drinks

PNP CHIEF/ A18

THE JOKER IS WILD

Probe of PDI, 4 solons sought over leak on secret meeting

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

SEN. JOKER ARROYO HAS FORMALLY asked the Senate to investigate the senators and other officials present at the Sept. 26 executive session with former Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri, for violating the secrecy rule on closed-door sessions.

Arroyo also asked the Senate to investigate the INQUIRER, which quoted unnamed sources in reporting what transpired in the late-night executive session with Neri, a key witness in the controversial $329-million deal with China's ZTE Corp. involving the National Broadband Network (NBN) project.

During a 10-hour Senate hearing earlier on Sept. 26, Neri, the former director general of the National Economic and Development Authority, continually invoked executive privilege in refusing to answer sena-

PROBE/ A19

ARROYO: The question arises: "Did four senators peddle the falsehoods that became the basis for the INQUIRER article?" ROGER MARGALLO

Spy vs spy: Nica revamp triggers demoralization

By Fe Zamora
and Tarra Quismundo

A PRESIDENTIAL DIRECTIVE TO IMPROVE the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency (Nica) has triggered a scramble for over 100 new positions but has sown demoralization in its ranks, the INQUIRER has learned.

The new posts were created by Malacañang to strengthen the role and authority of Nica, which has been designated Secre-

SPY VS SPY/ A6

GMA: NBN deal is dead

DIFFICULT DECISION EXPLAINED: President Arroyo and some Cabinet members hold a meeting with Chinese President Hu Jintao in Shanghai on Tuesday to tell him she's aborting the NBN-ZTE project. MALACANANG PHOTO

China accepts decision with understanding

By Michael Lim Ubac

SHANGHAI (VIA PLDT)—President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday told Chinese President Hu Jintao that the Philippines had decided to stop the controversial $329-million deal for the National Broadband Network (NBN) project.

The NBN contract with China's ZTE Corp. sparked an explosive controversy that has hounded Ms Arroyo's administration since the deal was signed on April 21.

At a closed-door bilateral meeting, Ms Arroyo took it upon herself to "explain" to President Hu her decision to stop the contract.

"At this point, the President explained 'the difficult decision' not to continue with the NBN contract," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye, recalling Ms Arroyo's words during the 50-minute meeting with the Chinese leader.

Sought for clarification, Bunye said: "I

GMA: NBN/ A18

THE OTHER SIDE UNDERSTANDS: President Hu Jintao (2nd from right) and other Chinese officials listen to Ms Arroyo and her officials with "understanding" about scrapping NBN-ZTE but that the [RP-China] relationship "is in very good shape." MALACAÑANG PHOTO

No TRO on 'Hello Garci' probe; SC grills petitioners

By Leila B. Salaverria

SUPREME COURT JUSTICES YESTERday invoked public interest in the reform of the electoral process as they grilled the lawyers of two retired justices who had sought to stop the renewed Senate inquiry into the "Hello Garci" wiretapping scandal.

After seven hours of oral arguments, the high court merely required the contending parties to submit their respective memoranda containing their positions within 15 days.

Earlier in the session, Justice Angelina Sandoval-Gutierrez said the retired justices—Santiago Ranada and Oswaldo Agcaoili—would do more for the country if they pushed for the Senate inquiry.

"I think your petitioners will be

NO TRO/ A17

No more Senate appearance for Abalos: See you in court

By Beverly T. Natividad

ONE DAY AFTER HE RESIGNED AS Commission on Elections chair, Benjamin Abalos Sr. announced that he had no intention of further appearing at the Senate inquiry on the controversial broadband deal and said he would rather see his accusers in court.

"What else could they extract from me," said Abalos, who attended his final formal session at the Comelec yesterday and then bade its officials and employees goodbye. *(See related story on Page A6.)*

Abalos was visibly angry at the treatment he got from the senators last week. He had vowed not to show up at the Senate probe but decided to attend after accusations against him appeared to be getting out of hand. Abalos said he did not plan to attend the hearing on its scheduled resumption

NO MORE/ A6

Mike A: I never said 'Back off'

By Tarra Quismundo

IMMEDIATELY ON THE DEFENSIVE upon returning home from a foreign trip, the man in the eye of the latest political storm to hit the Arroyo presidency yesterday denied ever uttering the now infamous words: "Back off."

"I just want to clarify, I never said 'back off.' That is not even in my vocabulary," the husband of President Macapagal-Arroyo said upon his arrival, even before the media could fire off any questions.

"And I never pointed a finger at Joey de Venecia," Jose Miguel Arroyo said at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia).

Businessman Jose "Joey" de Venecia III, son of Speaker Jose de Venecia, set off a major controversy two weeks ago when he testified at a Senate inquiry into the National Broadband Network

MIKE A/ A17

BACK IN: Mike Arroyo arrives from Europe via Hong Kong on Tuesday afternoon. He left on the eve of the start of the Senate NBN-ZTE probe. JESS YUSON

Razon now most powerful businessman, says JDV son

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

BUSINESSMAN ENRIQUE RAZON HAS joined President Macapagal-Arroyo on her state visit to China, leaving unanswered the allegation of former Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri that the tycoon had threatened him not to allow a rival to get into Manila's port business.

Razon, chair and president of International Container Terminal Services Inc. (ICTSI), had convinced Ms Arroyo to grace the opening of ICTSI's latest overseas expansion—Yantai Port, one of China's top 10 commercial ports.

Razon came to China on his own plane.

Businessman Jose "Joey" de Venecia III said he was not surprised Razon remained in the good graces of the President.

"Is he the most powerful businessmen in the country? I believe he is now the most powerful person not only because of his closeness to President Arroyo but also to First

RAZON/ A17

ENRIQUE RAZON: To China with GMA to inaugurate new ICTSI port. INQUIRER PHOTO

Heads of 2 Koreas meet for historic summit

SEOUL—AN UNSMILING NORTH KOrean leader, Kim Jong-il, welcomed South Korea's President Roh Moo-hyun to Pyongyang on Tuesday, displaying scant enthusiasm while orchestrated crowds cheered the start of the second-ever summit between the divided Koreas since World War II.

The greeting was in stark contrast to the first North-South summit in 2000, when Kim greeted then South Korean President Kim Dae-jung with smiles and clasped both his hands tightly in an emotional moment that softened the North Korean strongman's image to South Koreans and the world. They also harmonized while singing patriotic songs.

This time, Kim appeared reserved and unemotional, walking slowly and occasionally clapping lightly to encourage the crowd of thousands at the outdoor welcome ceremony, who

HEADS/ A10

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Luzon and Visayas will experience monsoon rains becoming frequent over the western sections of Luzon. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

Metro Manila	Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Rains
Baguio	Rains	Roxas	Rains
Tuguegarao	Rains	Cebu	Rains
Laoag	Rains	Tacloban	Rains
Clark Zone	Rains	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Rains	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Rains	Davao	Partly Cloudy

COMPILED BY: SCHATZI QUODALA, PDI RESEARCH/10/02/07 SOURCE: PAGASA

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WHAT'S INSIDE

MERALCO cuts rates by 65¢/kwh /A7

VILLAR SEES doom for RP-Japan act /A5

4 NAVY COMMANDOS slain in Basilan clash /A5

Malaysia wants out of peace process

KL impatient over slow pace of talks

MALAYSIA HAS THREATENED to withdraw monitors overseeing a four-year ceasefire between the Philippine military and the country's biggest Muslim separatist guerrilla group because of delays in peace talks, sources said yesterday.

Tension has risen lately between the army and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), with each side accusing the other of breaking the truce during a skirmish on the island of Basilan last week.

Yesterday, at least four Navy commandos and 10 rebels died in another firefight on Basilan, as troops pursued the Abu Sayyaf group, which has close links with the MILF. *(See related story on Page A5)*

A resumption in peace talks, scheduled to take place in the Malaysian capital Kuala Lumpur next month, is in doubt again after four postponements. The talks broke down a year ago amid disagreements over the size and wealth of a proposed ancestral homeland for Muslims on the southern island of Mindanao.

Getting impatient

Government and rebel sources told Reuters the Malaysian government was getting impatient, and threatened during an informal meeting in Kuala Lumpur last week to recall its 60 monitors to pressure the sides to resume talks.

Mohaqher Iqbal, the rebels' chief negotiator, told Reuters in a phone interview from his hideout on Mindanao that any withdrawal of Malaysian soldiers would endanger the truce and harm implementation of development projects.

"If that happens, it would have a big impact on the peace process," Iqbal said.

Unarmed Malaysian soldiers have been in Mindanao since 2004 as part of an effort to end nearly 40 years of conflict that has killed more than 120,000 people and displaced 2 million.

Libya and Brunei also have small contingents in the monitoring team.

Iqbar said last week's meeting in Kuala Lumpur had been "productive" but had failed to fix a date for formal talks.

Not poles apart

"Our differences were not really poles apart, we've narrowed the gaps from where we started two years ago," Iqbar said.

"But our counterparts could not commit to anything without the approval of the political leadership in Manila," he said.

"The government must have political will to conclude the peace process." Last week, the military accused MILF members of helping a band of Abu Sayyaf rebels during a firefight on Basilan island and threatened to file a protest to a ceasefire panel.

The MILF countered by saying troops had entered rebel territory without coordinating with the panel, and had attacked one of its camps.

There was no word on any MILF involvement in yesterday's fighting, sparked by a pre-dawn raid on a suspected Abu Sayyaf hideout.

Focus of attention

Mindanao has been a focus of international attention because Western governments believe it has been a training base for Islamic militants with links to al Qaida and regional group Jemaah Islamiyah.

Japan has been funding about $1 million worth of social and economic projects, including repairs of school buildings and installation of potable water systems.

The World Bank has a separate $3 million project helping set up cooperatives to start and manage small businesses, such as copra and rice production. *Reuters*

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GMA open to meeting with Jonas Burgos' ma

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARroyo is open to meeting with the mother of the missing activist Jonas Burgos, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said yesterday.

Bunye made the remark in reaction to reports that Edith Burgos, the widow of press freedom fighter Jose Burgos and mother of the missing Jonas, expressed her doubt about Ms Arroyo's dedication to human rights in the country.

"The President is open to such a meeting," Bunye said yesterday just before boarding the presidential flight bound for Shanghai where President Macapagal-Arroyo was scheduled to visit.

"I hope such a meeting takes place," Bunye added.

Ms Arroyo on Monday instructed the newly installed PNP chief Director General Avelino Razon to make an improved human rights situation his legacy when he retires from the service in September 2008.

"Let us give the new PNP chief Sonny Razon the benefit of the doubt. He is new on the job and promised to exert best efforts to do whatever is needed," Bunye told reporters.

He said Ms Arroyo was "dead serious" about solving the extra-judicial killings of leftist activists and journalists which he said "happened not just now but in several generations and administrations."

"She wants to finally put an end to this... violence," he said.

Norman Bordadora

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Prosecutors won't object to Atong's lotto consultancy

GOVERNMENT PROSECUTORS have no objection to Charlie "Atong" Ang's petition to the Sandiganbayan seeking the reversal of its earlier ruling that barred him from flying to Cambodia for a possible consulting job in a gaming company.

"The people submits the instant motion to the wise discretion of the court," said Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio in a one-page comment submitted to the antigraft court's Special Division.

Ang, a well-known former casino habitué and a gambling buddy of ousted President Joseph Estrada, received a job offer in August from 888 Corporation, which operates a lottery in Cambodia.

Citing his "expertise" as a former consultant to the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. in the Estrada administration, 888 executives wrote Ang asking him to help their company.

In his request to be allowed to fly to Cambodia, Ang had told the Sandiganbayan the job could be his ticket to settling his debts, incurred when he had to pay the P25-million penalty the court imposed on him after he pled guilty to a lesser offense in the plunder case against Estrada in which he was a coaccused.

Estrada was convicted of two counts of plunder and was sentenced to 40 years in prison. His conviction is under appeal.

The Sandiganbayan Special Division junked Ang's petition for a weeklong travel pass to Cambodia citing the possibility he would leave the jurisdiction of the court.

In placing Ang under two year's probation four months ago, the court ordered him not to participate in any form of gambling and to get the court's permission every time he wanted to leave Quezon City.

In his motion for reconsideration, Ang through his lawyers said he could not "simply escape and trifle with the generosity of this court."

He also said he would abide by the terms and conditions for travel that the court may impose—like putting up a travel bond—to guarantee his return.

"I really need that job to settle my arrears. I have no job offers here in the country," Ang had told the INQUIRER in an earlier interview. *Jocelyn R. Uy*

Corrections

IN THE SEPT. 27 ISSUE, an Across the Nation story on Page A16—"Preserving original Marinduque folk music"—misstated the name of the current director of the Center for Cultural Arts Studies of Marinduque State College. The director is professor Rex Emmanuel—not Manuel—Asuncion. The same article also misstated Asuncion's undergraduate course. Asuncion earned a Bachelor of Music—not Bachelor of Science in Music Education—degree.

* * *

IN THE SAME ISSUE, a photo caption on Page A10 misspelled the names of two members of the House of Representatives. They are Camarines Sur First District Rep. Dato—not Datu—Arroyo and Occidental Mindoro Rep. Girlie—not Gerlie—Villarosa.

* * *

IN THE OCT. 2 ISSUE, a "Did you know" item on Page A17 of the Metro section misstated that Sarao Motors Inc. was based in Pasay City. The country's pioneer jeepney maker was based in Las Piñas.

* * *

IN THE SAME ISSUE, a story on Page A4—"No more talks; Erap must ask for pardon—Puno"—misstated the age of the mother of ousted President Joseph Estrada. Mary Ejercito is 102—not 82—years old.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent to Lorna Kalaw Tirol, readers' advocate, e-mail address: readersadvocate@inquirer.com. ph or fax Nos. 897-47-93/94, Attn: Readers Advocate. Her phone number is 897-8808 Local 342.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, October 3, 2007
26th Week in Ordinary Time
1st Reading: Neh 2:1-8
Gospel: Luke 9:57-62

As Jesus and his disciples went on their way, a man said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head."

To another Jesus said, "Follow me." But he answered, "Let me go back now, for first I want to bury my father." And Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their dead; as for you, leave them and proclaim the kingdom of God."

Another said to him, "I will follow you, Lord, but first let me say goodbye to my family." And Jesus said to him, "Whoever has put his hand to the plow and looks back is not fit for the kingdom of God."

Commentary

Nehemiah is a servant. As he attends to the king, his sadness is revealed. He tells the king of the city of his ancestors lying in ruins and asks if he can return to rebuild it, then he would return as the servant of the king. He is given leave (surprisingly) and he also receives letters for safe-conduct, for wood. The favoring hand of God is upon him! Again it is unbelievers, those outside the land/people/covenant of Israel who enable prophets and people to once again worship God in their own place. Do we appreciate others not of our faith, nation, covenants, who are wise, gracious, and generous towards those who dwell in their nation and yet seek to serve another God?

We claim to be followers of Jesus, the Son of Man who had no place to lay his head, no home/no shelter, no family. But those who said they would follow him and his Father do no other work but the work of God alone. They obey God's will, bringing hope and true worship of God to all, along with the good news that what we do to one another, our God takes as done in honor to God himself, for our God is one of us—Jesus, the prophet, whose very word is flesh.

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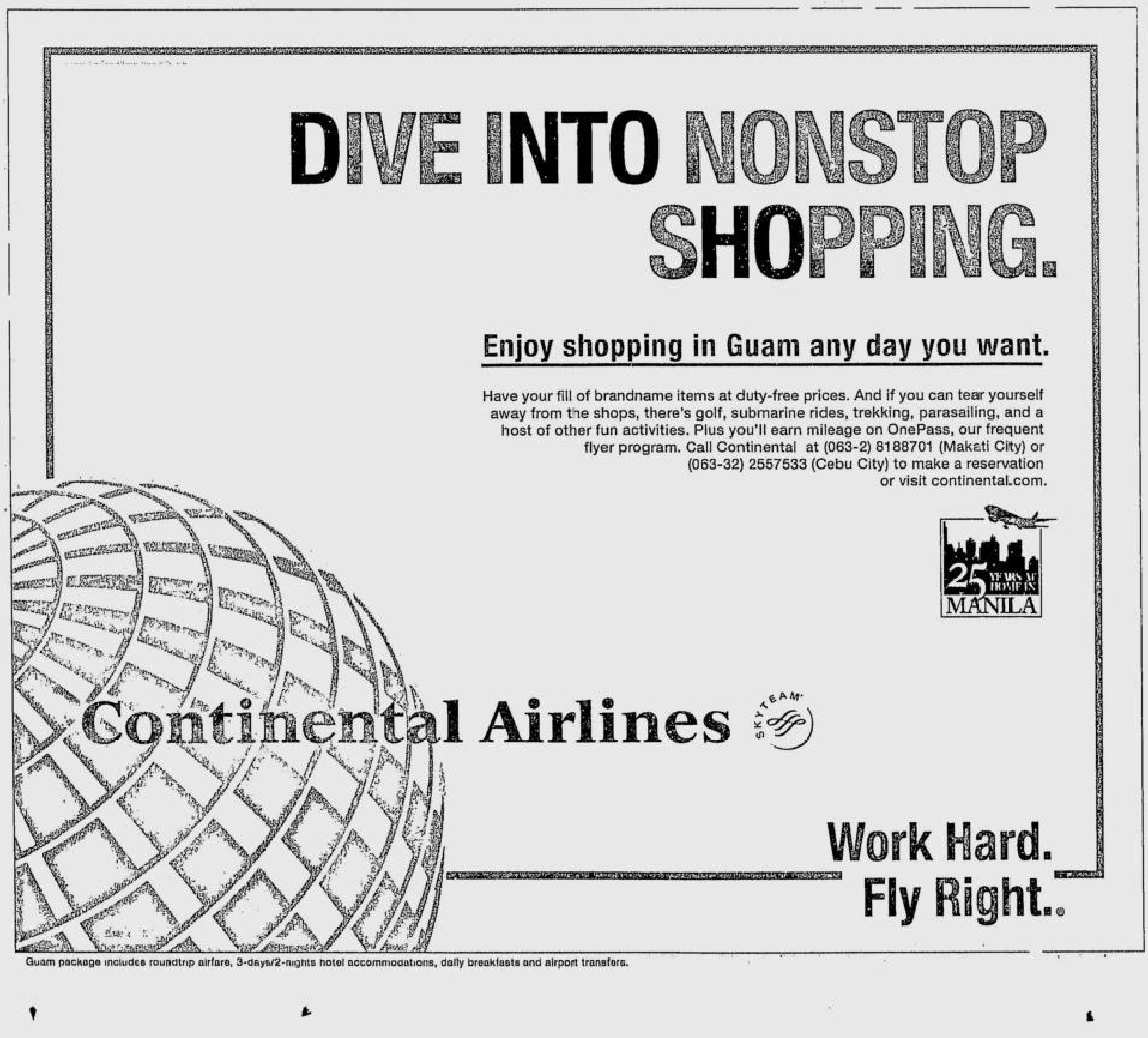

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Villar sees doom for RP-Japan pact

SENATORS ARE UNLIKELY TO RATIFY A free trade agreement with Japan in the deal's present form, Senate President Manuel Villar said yesterday.

Officials have been unable to convince the legislators that the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement (Jpepa) would be beneficial to the Philippines, said Villar.

The agreement, signed in September 2006, would remove import tariffs on more than 90 percent of goods traded between the two Asian countries and open the largely closed Japanese labor market to Filipino health workers.

But the Senate must ratify the agreement for it to become effective, which legislators have yet to do amid claims that the deal favors Japan.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has described the agreement as an economic priority.

"Personally I'm not impressed with the so-called economic benefits," Villar, seen as a likely candidate in the May 2010 presidential election, told reporters.

Nevertheless, he said he had an open mind and could still be convinced of the deal's merits, although he favors renegotiation.

Environmental groups have campaigned against the treaty allegedly because it would allow Tokyo to dump hazardous waste in the Philippines disguised as exports.

Villar said the activists "are better at presenting their case."

The free trade agreement is one of a raft of bilateral or regional deals being negotiated or signed by Asian countries amid a breakdown in the Doha round of the World Trade Organization trade talks.

Apart from his reservations over the trade deal with Japan, Villar said he thought the Philippines was "doing well" economically.

"We know we're on the verge of a take-off," he said.

He claimed that an Asian boom rather than Ms Arroyo's leadership was mostly responsible for that.

The Trade Union Congress of the Philippines said it expected Jpepa to eventually cause "significant job dislocation as a consequence of reduced, if not zero tariffs that will allow cheaper imports into the country."

TUCP spokesman Alex Aguilar called on the government to set aside an initial P2 billion to provide a "safety net" for workers who may lose their jobs as a result of the free trade treaty. He said the P2 billion could cover emergency assistance as well as skills retooling programs to enable displaced workers to get new jobs.

Meanwhile, the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas claimed that the Jpepa would turn the Philippines into a giant landfill for Japanese wastes, citing a landfill being constructed in Ternate, Cavite.

Willy Marbella, KMP internal deputy secretary general, quoted Cavite Gov. Ayong Maliksi as earlier announcing that the landfill would be for old appliances and electronic products from Japan.

The 84-hectare landfill, to be located in Barangay Sapang in Ternate, will be placed near a river that drains into Puerto Azul and farmlands, Marbella claimed.

He said the landfill would pose a very serious danger to the lives and livelihood of people in "definitely" Ternate and the neighboring town of Maragondon. *AFP and Jerome Aning*

4 Navy commandos slain in Basilan clash

By Nikko Dizon

FOUR MEMBERS OF THE PHILIPPINE Navy's elite fighting force and 10 suspected pirates were killed in an encounter yesterday on an island off Basilan, the military reported.

The fatalities on the government side were enlisted personnel from Unit 6 of the Naval Special Operations Group (Navsog), Lt. Col. Ariel Caculitan, Navy spokesperson, told reporters.

A lieutenant junior grade and an enlisted man were wounded and were in stable condition at Camp Gen. Navarro Hospital at the Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom) in Zamboanga City, Caculitan said. He did not identify the fatalities, however, pending notification of their next of kin.

The Navsog is the former Special Warfare and Action Group (Swag), the equivalent of the US Navy Seals.

Lawless group

Caculitan said the firefight took place on Lanjil Island, some 15 miles northeast of Basilan province, shortly after midnight yesterday.

He said the leader of the "lawless armed group," identified as Abduraja Sadikal, along with his brother Faisal, were among the fatalities on the pirates' side.

He said Sadikal's group was engaged in criminal activity and the military was "not discounting the possibility of its affiliation with the Abu Sayyaf terrorist group."

A Westmincom statement said the military operation was launched following reports Sadikal's group had been harassing residents of the island.

Naval Forces Western Mindanao (Combined) under Admiral Emilio Marayag dispatched members of Navsog and the Special Operations Group of Marine Battalion Landing Team 7 to check on the reports when they encountered Sadikal's group.

At least 20 armed men engaged the government troops.

Mission accomplished

Despite the casualties, the operation was successful, Caculitan said.

"Our objective was met, accomplished. The bandits scampered away in different directions," he said.

Westmincom said the Sadikal brothers were followers of Abu Sayyaf leader Anwar Abubakar who was killed during the kidnapping of Marilyn Chua in Alicia several years ago.

"(They) confiscate the fishermen's catch, sell drugs and harbor some members of the Abu Sayyaf," Marayag said.

An Abu Sayyaf member, meanwhile, was killed while a soldier was wounded in a 30-minute gun battle in Barangay Tiis, Talipao, Sulu, yesterday.

B Company of the 15th Infantry Battalion encountered at least 20 bandits while patrolling the area, Westmincom said.

The bandits withdrew leaving behind an M-16 rifle. *With a report from Julie S. Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao; AP*

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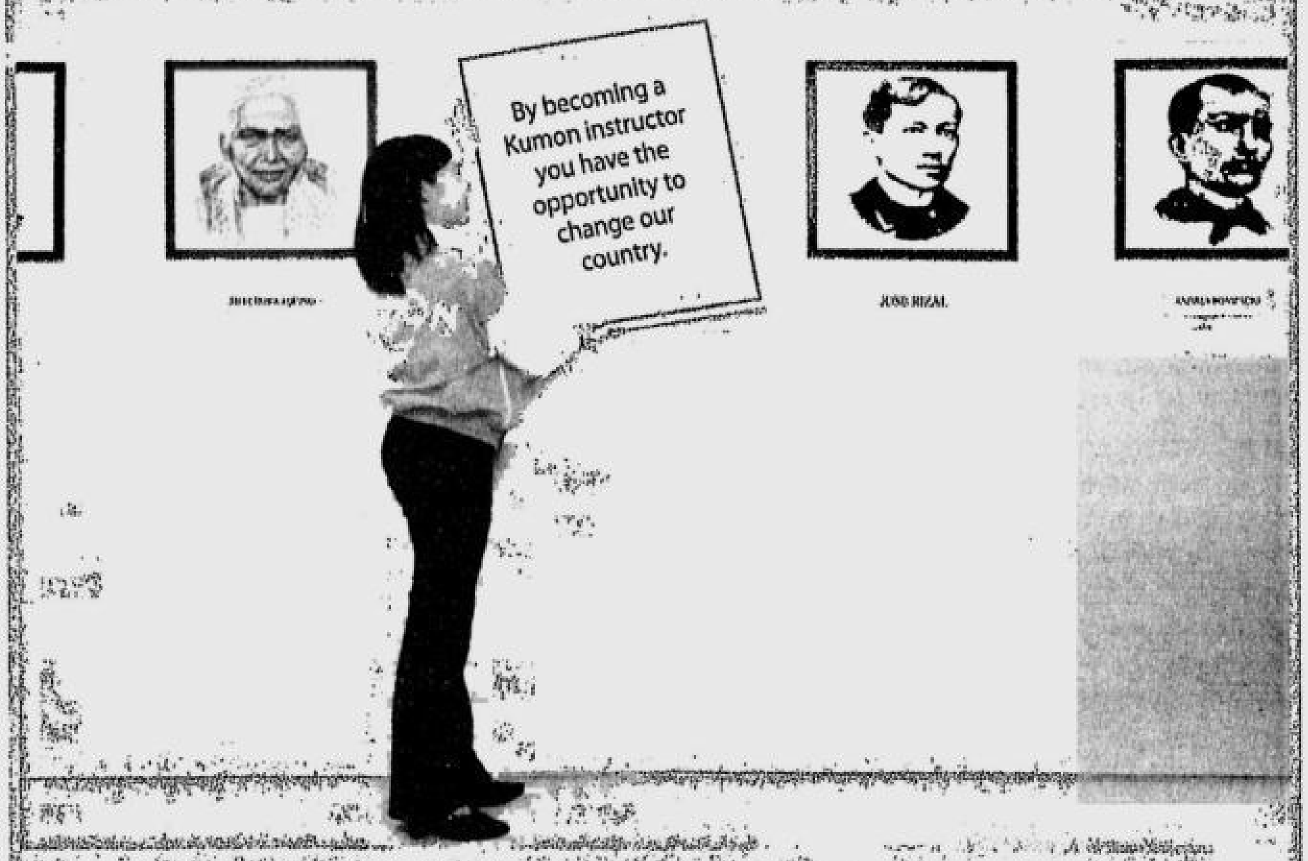
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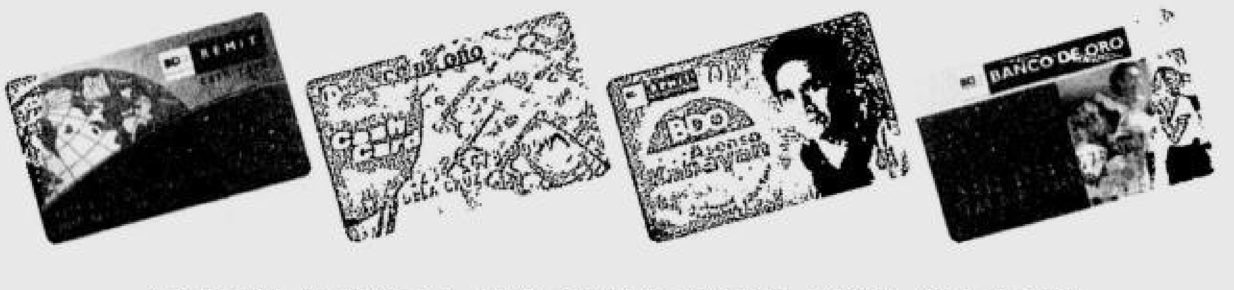

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'Business as usual' at Comelec with Borra as acting chair

By Beverly T. Natividad

IT'S "BUSINESS AS USUAL" AT the Commission on Elections following the unprecedented resignation of Comelec chair Benjamin Abalos, who officially turned over his post to Commissioner Resurreccion Borra yesterday.

Borra will be acting chair and will serve out the remainder of Abalos' term. Abalos was due to retire in February 2008.

Abalos bade the employees goodbye after he submitted his formal resignation to the Comelec and endorsed his remaining workload to his fellow commissioners.

Arriving with his wife, Corazon, at the Comelec office in Manila yesterday, Abalos attended his last en banc meeting with the commissioners to wind up work-related matters.

Abalos said the Comelec was not expected to face any more problems, particularly on the barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) elections on Oct. 29. He said the preparations had been made and would just be implemented.

"The Comelec goes on," spokesperson James Jimenez said.

Succession

Jimenez said the Comelec, through Resolution No. 7808, had provided for the rules of succession in the event of a vacancy. The commission en banc, he said, is set to designate Borra as the new chair as provided for by Resolution No. 7808.

For the coming barangay and SK elections, Jimenez said, the other commissioners are expected to take over Abalos' regional assignments.

Borra will take over the National Capital Region. Commissioners Nicodemo Ferrer and Rene Sarmiento, on the other hand, will be assigned to the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and Region IX, respectively.

Bulwark of democracy

Borra told reporters that while the commissioners were shocked by the decision of Abalos to resign, they respected it.

"Commissioners will come and go but the institution must remain because this is the bulwark of democracy," Borra said.

Commissioners Florentino Tuason and Romeo Brawner echoed the sentiment of Borra, saying the Comelec would make sure that it was prepared to continue its constitutionally mandated work with the coming October election.

Despite Abalos' resignation, there are still five commissioners left so they can still muster the majority to function, Brawner said.

Replacement

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita yesterday told reporters that President Macapagal-Arroyo was scouting for a new Comelec chair.

"Of course, you may be assured that the President ever since is on a continuing search for good people to occupy the vacant posts in the Comelec," Ermita said.

"She knows many people who she may think she can name to occupy the two posts that are now vacant. Perhaps, when the President comes back, while it's not being discussed, it's normal for her to be thinking about it during the next few days," he added. *With a report from Norman Boradora*

No more Senate appearance for Abalos: See you in court

From page A1

on Thursday.

"After 12 hours of the same questions on the same subject, they will call me again? What more? *Para bastusin na naman? Ano ba naman!* (To shame me again? What is this!)" said Abalos.

"Let us not waste our time. I think it is too much already," he added.

Abalos announced that his lawyers were preparing a suit against former Socioeconomic Secretary Romulo Neri and businessman Jose "Joey" de Venecia III who had accused him of brokering the National Broadband Network (NBN) project with China and offering bribes to carry out the $329-million deal.

"They are now preparing a jumbo suit. We would like to prove the conspiracy of all these people," Abalos said. He declined to elaborate but indicated there may be more people he planned to sue.

Abalos, 72, resigned as Comelec chair on Monday, four months before his scheduled retirement from the constitutional body to which he was appointed in 2002. He said he did not wish to distract the Comelec in its conduct of the Oct. 29 barangay elections.

His resignation came a week after Neri told the senators that Abalos offered him a P200-million bribe to endorse the NBN project.

Iloilo Vice Gov. Rolex Suplico then filed an impeachment case against Abalos for culpable violation of the Constitution, betrayal of public trust and graft and corruption. With the resignation of Abalos, who has denied any wrongdoing, the impeachment case has become moot and relegated to the congressional archives.

Removing shield of immunity

By resigning, Abalos said he was doing his accusers a favor because he was removing the "shield of immunity" accorded his office as a constitutional body and allowing himself to be sued in court.

"I know I will be facing charges by doing that," he said.

GOODBYE, BOSS: Employees of the Comelec, where its now resigned Chair Benjamin Abalos held sway for the past six years, mob him after he attended his last en banc meeting with the commissioners at the main office in Intramuros.

REM ZAMORA

"I prefer to face these charges before the proper forum. Impeachment is neither an administrative nor criminal proceeding. It is a political one. I want to divorce myself from politics. I want to dispel all of those rumors (that) I have befriended so many congressmen, that I have been protected by Malacañang," Abalos said.

"Now, nobody can say that I have an office that I am taking advantage of," he said.

P10-million libel suits

Gabriel Villareal, Abalos' lawyer, said he was set to file two P10-million libel suits against Neri and De Venecia III this week. Another perjury case against Neri is also in the offing for his testimonies in the Senate inquiry last week.

Villareal said Abalos would use the regular courts as his main forum to continue his "crusade" toward clearing his name and reputation.

Supplementary to the civil damage suits against Neri and De Venecia, he said, Abalos will also have a chance to clear his name on bribery cases that they heard will also be launched against the Comelec chair in the office of the Ombudsman.

Villareal said Abalos was ready to face any charges—serious, less serious, and even funny—that would be launched against him, even the plunder charge that Suplico said he would lodge.

"I admire him (Suplico) for the extent of his imagination but I would be quite interested to know how he can produce a plunder suit against Abalos with what he has at the moment," Villareal said.

Mike A: I never said 'Back off'

From page A1

(NBN) project and recounted how Arroyo supposedly tried to browbeat him into backing out of the project.

De Venecia said that at a meeting at the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club in Mandaluyong, Ms Arroyo's husband pointed a finger inches from his face and told him: "Back off."

"How can I point a finger and say 'back off' to someone I don't even know?," Arroyo said in a minute-long talk with the media.

"Put yourself in my position. Can you tell someone off right away na first time '*nyo mag*meet and say 'back off, back off'? You do not say that."

He arrives, she leaves

Arroyo said his piece upon arriving from Hong Kong at 4:48 p.m., 15 days after leaving the country on his second foreign trip since his critical heart operation in April. He accompanied the President to the Apec summit last month.

Arroyo quietly left the country on Sept. 17 on the eve of the younger De Venecia's explosive Senate testimony naming Arroyo as the "mystery man" who tried to intimidate him.

De Venecia's firm, Amsterdam Holdings Inc., had contested the NBN project, which was later awarded to telecommunications giant ZTE Corp. of China.

Bribery claims

The controversy burgeoned into a full-blown scandal following De Venecia's claim that resigned Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. had offered him $10 million for AHI to stay away from the project, and an allegation by former SocioEconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri that Abalos had also offered him what he understood to be a P200-million bribe.

He arrived on board a Cathay Pacific flight at the Naia almost 12 hours after Ms Arroyo flew out to China on the first leg of a two-nation Asian swing.

Speaking briefly about his trip, Arroyo said: "It was a vacation, thank you very much ... I'm well-rested now."

It still wasn't clear though whether Arroyo spent all of his two weeks in Hong Kong or whether he took a forward flight from there to an undisclosed destination. Unconfirmed reports said he flew to Europe.

Only a reminder

Arroyo admitted meeting De Venecia at Wack Wack but said: "That's why it was a chance meeting, only at Wack Wack."

During the encounter—the first time they met, based on Arroyo's brief account—Ms Arroyo's husband said he cautioned the Speaker's son about getting his hands on the project.

"What I did was I reminded him, I reminded that he might be liable under the antigraft law because he's the son of the Speaker. He cannot deal with government contracts," said Arroyo, a lawyer.

Chance encounter

He did not elaborate on what else, if anything, transpired during the meeting and did not say when it happened.

Abalos had also admitted meeting De Venecia at Wack Wack but told last week's Senate hearing that it was a chance encounter.

Asked if he would file charges against De Venecia—as Abalos had threatened—Arroyo replied: "I don't know. That's up to my lawyers."

Flanked by guards from the Presidential Security Group and airport officials, Arroyo immediately left the old terminal via the exclusive Dignitaries Lounge, where the media were barred.

Spy vs spy: Nica revamp triggers demoralization

From page A1

tariat to the Anti-Terrorism Council under the newly enacted Human Security Act of 2007.

The low morale is reflected in a so-called "white paper," e-mails, office chit-chat and protest letters sent via express mail and passed on from one person to the next.

The hushed campaign has spilled out of the headquarters of the country's version of the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to regional offices, INQUIRER informants said.

Restiveness is said to be spreading even beyond the highly secretive agency as disgruntled employees quietly protest a reorganization that purportedly awarded prime positions to colleagues short on eligibility.

Interviews with Nica insiders and documents obtained by the INQUIRER showed that a special committee created to revamp Nica's plantilla had appointed employees, including those whose qualifications were short of the criteria, to 100 new positions under the reorganization scheme.

'Exercise in favoritism'

Entailing salary upgrades, the appointments sidetracked other more qualified and longer serving personnel, sources said. This has prompted employees to view the vacancy fill-ups as an exercise in favoritism.

"Most of those promoted were given their positions because they were relatives of those [in the appointment committee], while others are friends. And there's no transparency in the process," said a long-time Nica employee.

"That's why our joke here is, we should make new babies and get members [of the committee] as *ninongs* and *ninangs* so we'd have better chances at getting promoted," the insider added.

Nica sources, who spoke to the INQUIRER on condition that they will not be named, claimed the appointments and promotions lacked transparency and favored relatives and friends of the agency's top brass. The sources are employees of Nica, which bars them from talking to the media.

"The appointments are questionable because they appointed personnel without masteral degrees when the position clearly required a masteral degree," said one source.

2 Palace directives

Documents furnished the INQUIRER showed that on Aug. 30, Nica Director General Cesar P. Garcia Jr. issued Agency Order No. 176 announcing the appointment, effective the next day, of 47 personnel to the positions of director, chief administrative officer, internal auditor, administrative officer and intelligence specialist.

Also on Aug. 30, Garcia issued Agency Order No. 177, effective the following day, naming 22 personnel to the positions of director, chief administrative officer and national intelligence specialist on "temporary status."

In his two memos, Garcia cited two Malacañang directives, namely Executive Order No. 69 dated Jan. 27, 2002, and Administrative Order No. 68 dated April 8, 2003, as basis for the reorganization at the Nica, which is under the administrative supervision of the National Security Council.

EO 69 provides for "the reorganization of the Nica ... to institute structural reforms to enable it to enhance its intelligence assessment and operational competence, strengthen its capability for intelligence collection and allow the Agency to take the lead in intelligent management."

AO 68 also allows the Nica to "strengthen its role and authority" as the lead intelligence collection agency that reports directly to the Office of the President.

100 new plantilla items

To implement the reorganization, Garcia created the Special Committee on Career Development and Personnel Management early this year. On May 16, the chair of the special committee issued a set of criteria to be used in evaluating and recommending "deserving personnel for placement" to the 100 new plantilla items.

A "disposition form" issued by the special committee also set specific criteria, which included a masteral degree for those aspiring for positions ranging from intelligence specialist to director, the document said.

The INQUIRER sources, however, said at least two of those appointed to the position of chief administrative officer and one for the position of intelligence specialist did not have masteral degrees.

A number of those named for the same positions "on temporary status" were still working on their master's degrees, one source said.

Special committee

"Giving the employee a temporary appointment is a way of reserving that position. Why not give that position to those who already have master's degrees?" another source said.

A ranking Nica officer who was bypassed sent a five-page letter to Garcia questioning the selection process done by the special committee. The letter said members of the panel "should have been more circumspect by not participating and voting" in favor of a "*kumpadre* and bosom friend."

The special committee's criteria also included performance based on the semi-annual performance appraisal, job knowledge and years of service, experience in intelligence, special training, emotional quotient and ability for social interaction.

The panel also noted that "personnel who garner highest points [in educational attainment] but with deficiencies will be given one year to complete the requirement. In the meantime, their appointment will be temporary until the deficiency is completed."

The special committee also warned that appointees deficient in the educational requirement will be returned to their former ranks, appointments and salaries.

President Macapagal-Arroyo's EO 69 cited the need for Nica "to be sufficiently responsive to the challenges of the new millennium" in light of unspecified "contemporary developments."

Aftermath of 9/11

Nica sources said this referred to upgrades in the world's intelligence community following the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks on the United States.

INQUIRER sources said the appointment process had dampened morale among Nica employees in the Manila headquarters and in the regional offices.

"If you are not that known among members of the committee and your supervisor, you will not be recommended. Even if you are capable, that's what happens, you never get the chance to move up," said an employee in a Nica office north of Manila.

"Almost all of my colleagues bear this same sentiment. It's like they no longer want to work because of what is happening," added the source, speaking in Filipino.

An employee detailed at the headquarters said: "Our morale is really low. My colleagues lack enthusiasm in working but they are just forced to work because they have nowhere to go."

Meralco cuts rates by 65¢/kwh

By Abigail L. Ho

RESIDENTS IN THE FRANCHISE areas of the Manila Electric Co. will enjoy a 65-centavo per kilowatt-hour (kWh) reduction in their electricity bills this month due to the partial implementation of the mandated 30-centavos-per-kWh Power Act Reduction (PAR) and the decline in generation cost.

Meralco president and chief operating officer Jesus Francisco said the National Power Corp. yesterday sent Meralco a credit memo worth P425.3 million, representing cumulative PAR from Dec. 26, 2006, to July 25.

Section 72 of RA 9136, or the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001 (Epira), provides that residential end-users shall get a rate reduction of 30 centavos per kWh for power sourced from Napocor by power distributors.

This particular rate reduction should be reflected as a separate line item on residential consumers' monthly electricity bills.

Line item

For 10 months now, however, this line item has not been present in Meralco's billing statements.

The rate reduction in the October billings will reach as much as 65 centavos per kWh as this includes the 54-centavos-per-kWh PAR-related reduction, the four-centavos-per-kWh generation cost-related cut, and the corresponding 12-percent value-added tax reduction.

This means that residential customers consuming 100 kWh a month will see their bills go down by P65, while those using 200 kWh will pay P130 less.

Following Meralco's receipt of the credit memo, however, Francisco said it could now pass on a reduction of 54 centavos per kWh, with more PAR-related cuts to follow in the future.

The P425.3 million covered only seven months' worth of PAR, he said, so there should still be another three months' worth of discounts that Napocor could pass on to Meralco which in turn could pass on to its residential customers.

This could amount to around 10 centavos per kWh for each of the three remaining months, he said.

He said the PAR should be reflected on bills every month.

"We hope they will now give us the mandated rate reduction faithfully, especially now that we have started with this accumulated (amount). We hope this will push through," he said.

More cuts

Apart from the PAR-related cut, he said Meralco's residential customers would also enjoy another four-centavos-per-kWh reduction as a result of improved dispatch of the distribution utility's independent power producers and the stronger peso.

Average rate from the IPPs went down to P4.01 per kWh in September from P4.27 per kWh in August, and the cost of power sourced from Napocor was also 21.4 centavos lower at P4.90 per kWh.

Although cost of power sourced from the wholesale electricity spot market was higher by P1.64 per kWh last month, its effect was not that big since Meralco sourced only 12 percent of its supply requirements from the electricity bourse.

The bulk of its supply, or 52 percent, came from IPPs First Gas Power Corp.'s 1,000-MW Sta. Rita and 500-MW San Lorenzo and Quezon Power Philippines Ltd. The 36-percent balance came from Napocor.

Nora Aunor is off the book

AUNOR JANET SUSAN R. NEPALES

LOS ANGELES—DRUG CHARGES against Filipino superstar Nora Aunor (aka Nora Villamayor) were dismissed here on Monday and the case against her has been closed, according to lawyers Claire Espina and Sherwin Edelberg of the law offices of Edelberg and Espina.

"The court found that Aunor has successfully complied with all terms and conditions under the law and has performed satisfactorily during the Drug Diversion Program. Thus, the arrest of Aunor shall be deemed to have never occurred and she shall be considered not to have been arrested in the first place, leaving her with no criminal record of the incident all pursuant to Section 1000.4 of the California Penal Code," said the press statement of Edelberg and Espina.

Aunor, 54, was arrested in 2005 after security screeners at Los Angeles International Airport said they found eight grams of methamphetamine (shabu in the Philippines) in a film container in her carry-on bag.

She pleaded guilty to drug possession, but escaped jail after agreeing to enter a drug rehabilitation program. Criminal proceedings were suspended when she was accepted into Drug Court on Dec. 22, 2005. The court emphasizes treatment over incarceration.

But Aunor left the drug rehab program in April 2006, after failing to reach an agreement with another judge over her request to be allowed to travel outside of Los Angeles.

Her attorneys, Edelberg and Espina, decided to enroll Aunor in an 18-month drug diversion program, which allowed her to meet her filming and concert schedules for 2006.

In an earlier story published in the INQUIRER, Aunor's lawyers explained the difference between Drug Court and the diversion program: "Drug Court requires no plea to be made while undergoing the program, while diversion does, plus, Drug Court requires random drug testing and diversion does not."

Janet Susan R. Nepales

'Ineng' hovers over RP Sea

TROPICAL DEPRESSION "INENG" INtensified into a storm even as it remained nearly stationary over the Philippine Sea east of northern Luzon early yesterday.

Ineng spawned monsoon rains over the western sections of the country, including Metro Manila, for two days in a row Tuesday, according to the Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pag-asa).

It was forecast to bring light to moderate rain to Baguio and Angeles cities in northern Luzon, Metro Manila and Tagaytay in southern Luzon, and Tacloban, Cebu and Bacolod cities in the Visayas until this morning.

"While the storm is there, we will continue to experience monsoon rain," said weather forecaster Peter Kindipan Jr.

While it was not forecast to hit land, Pagasa said Ineng would enhance the southwest monsoon and bring rain over the western sections of the country.

The surge of the southwest monsoon induced by Ineng would affect the seaboards of Luzon and Western Visayas, the weather bureau said. *TJ Burgonio*

Fishers tell of shark attack

CAMP VICENTE LIM, LAGUNA—FOUR rescued crew members of a cargo ship which sank off the coast of Cagayancillo, Palawan, on Saturday watched helplessly as their coworkers were eaten alive by sharks even as they screamed for help, a police official said yesterday.

Senior Supt. Dennis Peña, Palawan police director, said the four are still in shock after seeing their colleagues being "mangled by sharks" and are now confined at the Cuyo District Hospital.

"They said they could hear the crew members crying out. They saw them being eaten by sharks, but they could not do anything," Peña said over the phone.

Based on this account of the survivors, Peña said the 14 missing crew members of the Mia could already be dead while stressing that search and rescue operations would continue.

The Mia sank in the Sulu Sea east of Cagayancillo, Palawan, on Saturday amid rough waves stirred up passing tropical storm Hanna, said Coast Guard spokesperson Lt. Armand Balilo.

Word reached the Coast Guard after a fishing boat rescued four other crewmen on Monday.

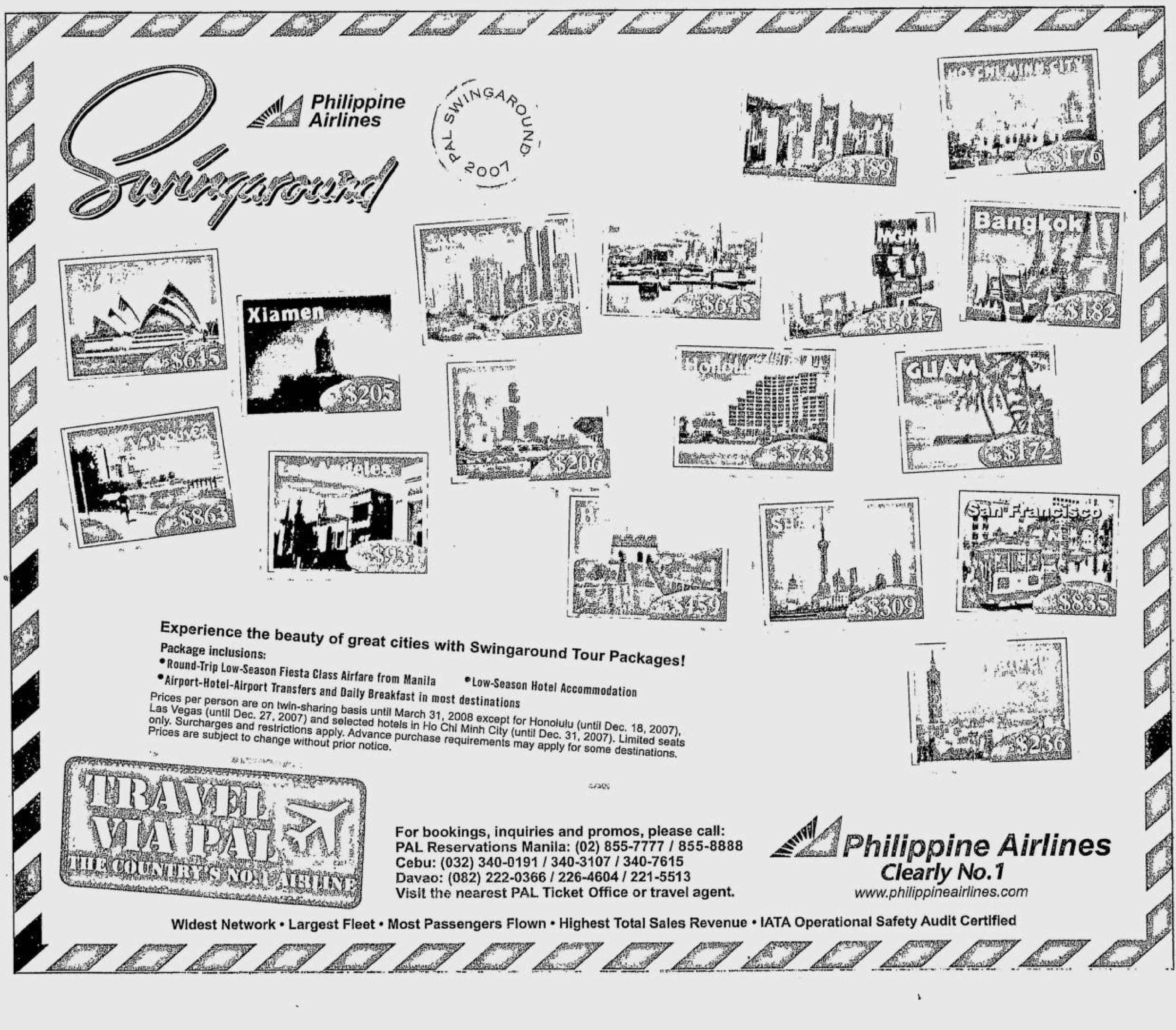
Rescue vessels have already been dispatched to the scene in hopes that some survivors might still be there, Balilo said.

But the weather has remained stormy, hampering search efforts, he said.

The 426-ton Mia, registered to the JPS Shipping Lines, was carrying cement from Cebu to Brooke's Point in Palawan when it ran into strong winds and big waves churned by the tropical depression.

Four of the ship's crew identified as chief mate Roulette Sapaluda, Rey Cabuhay, Marlon Tiguman and Richard Abregana were rescued by passing fishing boat Allister.

Peña said the investigation is now focused on the possibility that the sunken cargo ship was overloaded. He said the ship left San Fernando, Cebu, on Sept. 26 loaded with 800 metric tons of cement. The ship was expected to arrive in Brooke's Point two days later. *Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon, and Margaux C. Ortiz*



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Solon says cheap meds bill still favors multinationals

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE GOOD NEWS IS THE HOUSE OF Representatives may finally pass the long-awaited cheaper medicines bill before it goes on a three-week break beginning Oct. 12.

The bad news, in the words of one of the bill's authors, is the measure could end up still benefiting the giant multinational pharmaceutical companies instead of sick Filipinos who desperately need a break from high medicine prices.

Iloilo Rep. Ferjenel Biron described the bill prepared by the House committee on trade's technical working group as a "compromise."

The bill is a consolidation of 24 measures, including Biron's House Bill No. 1, all aimed at drastically lowering drug prices in the country.

"It's a version the multinationals will be able to tolerate," Biron told the INQUIRER in an interview, citing the provision that allows the parallel importation of patented drugs.

"They'll not be hurt at the end of the day because it's still their products that will be consumed by the Filipino consumer," he said.

The bill would allow the importation of patented drugs—which are sold abroad by the same companies operating in the Philippines—but at much lower prices.

"(The multinationals') revenue will just be transferred from one pocket to another," he said.

Speaker Jose de Venecia announced yesterday the cheaper medicines bill, which failed to pass during the last Congress, would be passed next week, along with the proposed P1.227-trillion national budget for 2008.

Biron had insisted on including a provision in the bill regulating drug prices. Critics of the provision said this went against free market principles.

The closest the committee got to approving such a provision was the creation of an "interim drug prices regulation board."

The board has one year to formulate an "operational plan" to regulate drug prices. It would require congressional approval for the plan.

But, "it's a lousy provision," Biron said.

The Senate, meanwhile, passed on second reading yesterday its version of the cheaper medicines bill.

The measure entitled, "An Act to Provide for Quality Affordable Medicines," was a consolidation of the bills filed by Senate President Manny Villar and Senators Manuel Roxas, Antonio Trillanes IV, Pia Cayetano, Juan Miguel Zubiri, Loren Legarda, Lito Lapid and Juan Ponce Enrile. *With Dona Z. Pazzibugan*

Eid'l Fitr declared a holiday

PRESIDENT MACApagal-Arroyo has declared Oct. 12 a regular nonworking holiday to celebrate Eid'l Fitr.

Eid'l Fitr marks the end of Ramadan, the 40-day Muslim feast of prayer and fasting.

"Proclamation No. 1397 declares Friday, Oct. 12, 2007, a regular holiday throughout the country in observance of Eid'l Fitr," said Press Secretry Ignacio Bunye in a statement.

"It is issued only now because the Muslim holiday is subject to the sighting of the new moon," he said. *Norman Bordadora*

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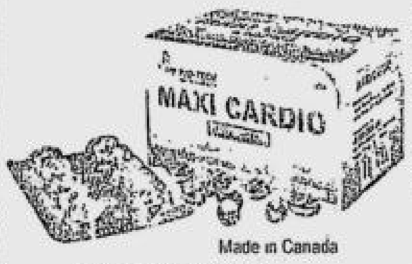

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Scorpions, spiders on a plane from HK

IF CINEMA SCARED VIEWERS WITH "SNAKES on a Plane," real life has scorpions and spiders.

Kept in nets and transparent plastic boxes, some 300 scorpions and spiders believed to be tarantulas were found inside a package at the Central Mail Exchange Center (CMEX) of the Bureau of Customs' district office at the airport on Monday afternoon.

Sent via postage through a Cathay Pacific flight from Hong Kong, the poisonous insects were found during a routine pre-release check at the CMEX on Monday, when a broker claimed the package.

Nelson Ebio, acting port collector at the CMEX, said the package was "misdeclared" to be containing just pieces of clothing.

"It was misdeclared because what was written on the dispatch was "personal clothing." That's why the examiner was surprised when it was opened," Ebio said.

"The scorpions almost bit the examiner," he said.

The insects were found in separate plastic containers with bored holes to allow breathing, while some were placed in bottles. They were then placed in a styrofoam box and then stored in the carton box, concealed under few pieces of worn-out clothing, Ebeo said.

The engineer noted that it was the first time for CMEX examiners to encounter mailed poisonous insects. He wouldn't hazard a guess why the scorpions and spiders were flown to Manila.

Tarra Quismundo

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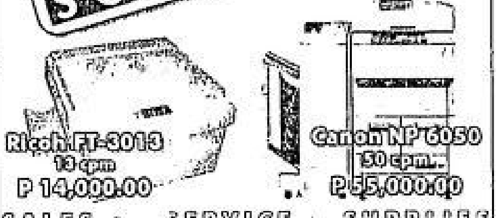

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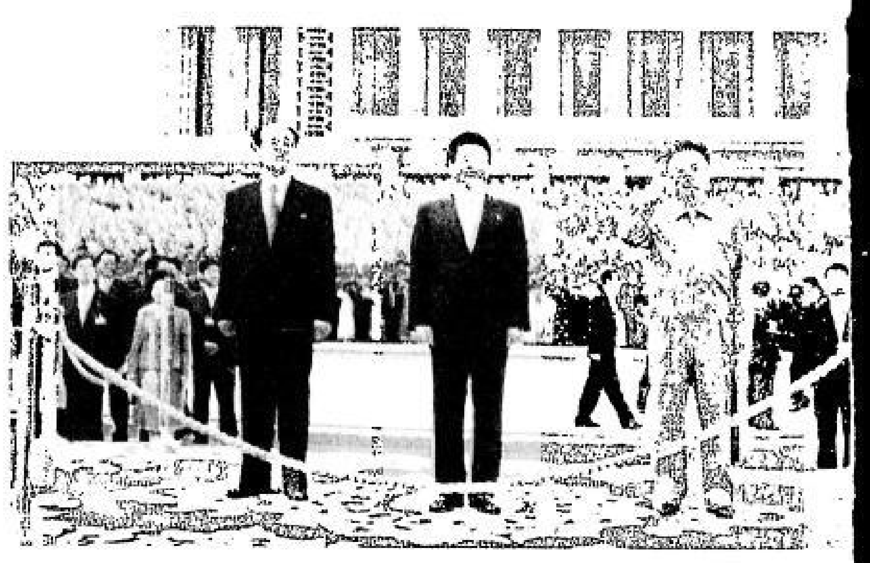
ROK leader, wife wear North Korean watch

HISTORIC WALK: South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun and his wife get down from their vehicle and walk toward the border between the two Koreas on Tuesday to start a summit aimed at ending 50 years of animosity between them. REUTERS



SECOND SUMMIT: Kim Jong-il (right) and his No. 2 man Kim Yong-nam flank Korean President Roh Moo-hyun at welcoming rites in Pyongyang, the North capital.

SEOUL—REPUBLIC OF KOREA PRESIDENT Roh Moo-hyun and his wife sported watches made in North Korea for their trip to Pyongyang in a gesture of reconciliation for the second-ever summit of the divided Koreas.

The time pieces—produced at an industrial complex in North Korea's border city of Kaesong—are seen as a symbol of Roh's intention to expand inter-Korean economic cooperation and eventually build an economic community between the rival states.

"It is a symbol of inter-Korean economic cooperation and appears to demonstrate the will for common prosperity" of the two Koreas, Kim Jong-sup, deputy presidential spokesperson, told reporters.

Roh, who joined First Lady Kwon Yang-suk in wearing one of the watches, also brought nine more of them as gifts for North Korean leader Kim Jong-il and other officials, said Kim.

The sprawling Kaesong complex, jointly run by the rival Koreas, combines South Korean technology and management expertise with cheap North Korean labor. Currently, 27 South Korean companies operate factories there, employing about 18,000 North Korean workers, making watches, sneakers, clothing and other cheap consumer goods.

The price tag of the watch is 198,000 won ($217), more than three times the average monthly wage of the North Korean workers at Kaesong.

It was unclear how Kim, known for luxurious tastes in food and drink, would react to the relatively inexpensive gifts. Kim has presented top military officials in his country with expensive Swiss-made Rolex watches to seal loyalty to his regime, according to North Korean defectors in South Korea.

Mercedes Benz S600

Roh rode in a Mercedes Benz S600 Guard armored vehicle as he traveled to the North for the summit.

South Korea also has a bulletproof BMW 760Li sedan and Hyundai luxury sedan for the President's official use, according to South Korean media.

Roh's office did not say why it chose the S600 Guard, which features a high level of protection against firearms, grenade shrapnel and other explosive devices as well as tires that can still work even if punctured.

South Korea already has set up a stone monument to commemorate where its president crossed the frontier on foot to head to a summit with the North Korean leader.

Roh briefly walked across the Military Demarcation Line, inside the 4-km-wide Demilitarized Zone separating the two Koreas, on Tuesday before getting back in his car to head toward Pyongyang for the meeting with Kim.

The inscription on the monument—which was handwritten by Roh and carved into the stone—marks the first-ever crossing of the frontier on foot by a South Korean president, according to Roh's office.

The inscription reads: "The road to peace and prosperity."

Human rights protest

A German activist calling attention to human rights issues in North Korea was forcefully ejected from a press center in a Seoul hotel wh
dreds of South Korean and
journalists were covering t
mit.

Norbert Vollertsen, a physi
former aid worker who s
months in North Korea, called
discuss human rights during h
with Kim.

The North has long been ac
human rights groups of abusin
zens. Between 150,000 and
people are believed to be held
camps for political reasons.
North denies this.

It remains unclear whether
raise the human rights issue wi

Vollertsen made a simila
protest in Seoul in 2005 durin
conference by US Secretary
Condoleezza Rice.

Heads of 2 Koreas meet for histori

From page A1

waved red and pink paper flowers.

Earlier, during the 200-km journey by road from Seoul, Roh stepped out of his vehicle to walk across the border that divides the Koreas in the center of the heavily fortified Demilitarized Zone—the first time any Korean leader has crossed the land border.

In the first summit between the Koreas in 2000, the South's Kim flew to Pyongyang.

'Wall will fall'

"This line is a wall that has divided the nation for a half-century. Our people have suffered from too many hardships and development has been held up due to this wall," Roh said before crossing.

"This line will be gradually erased and the wall will fall," he said. "I will make efforts to make my walk across the border an occasion to remove the forbidden wall and move toward peace and prosperity."

This week's summit, which runs through Thursday, comes a year after the North conducted its first test detonation of a nuclear bomb.

The explosion catalyzed world opposition to the regime but soon led to a reversal of Washington's

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(the "*Asset*") The Asset is being sold on an "*as is where is*" basis, and includes the land underlying the Asset.

Interested parties must submit a Letter of Interest ("*LOI*") to the Committee which shall state the full name, address, telephone and fax number of the interested party, name of the principal contact, and signed by an authorized representative. All LOIs must be received by the Committee at the PSALM Office, with address at the 7th Floor, Bankmer Building, 6756 Ayala Avenue, Makati City, not later than 5:00 p.m. on 10 October 2007 (the "*LOI Submission Deadline*"). Only interested parties that submit an LOI by the LOI Submission Deadline shall be allowed to participate further in the privatization of the Asset.

As a prerequisite to the receipt of the Bidding Package, interested parties shall execute a Confidentiality Agreement and an Undertaking pursuant to Section 78 of RA 9136, both in the forms provided by PSALM, and pay a non-refundable fee in the amount of Five Hundred U.S. Dollars (U.S. $ 500.00) (the "*Participation Fee*"). The Participation Fee shall either be in cash, manager's check or cashier's check. All bank charges, if any, shall be for the account of the interested party. The Confidentiality Agreement, Undertaking, and Participation Fee must be received by the Committee on or before 5:00 p.m. on 12 October 2007 to entitle an interested party further participation in the privatization of the Asset.

The Bidding Package, which included the Bidding Procedures shall be issued during office hours (9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) from 8 October until 19 October 2007 at 5:00 p.m. (the "*Deadline*") at the PSALM Office. Only interested parties who have been issued the Bidding Package by the Deadline or consortium (as described below) will be allowed to participate further in the privatization of the Asset.

Interested parties that submit the LOI must be the party that will participate in the privatization process, submit a bid and enter into the pertinent agreements. Once an interested party submits the Confidentiality Agreement and Undertaking and pays the Participation Fee, such interested party may no longer be substituted in the privatization process, except through a consortium in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Bidding Procedures, among the requirements of which are (i) such interested party must own at least a majority of the shares outstanding and entitled to vote in such consortium; (ii) the consortium must be a juridical entity; and (iii) a letter requesting to bid through consortium must be submitted to the Committee on or before the deadline set for the same in the Bidding Procedures.

The schedule of the bidding activities shall be as follows

Due Diligence	4 October to 12 December 2007
Pre-bid Conference	24 October 2007
Bid Submission Deadline	19 December 2007, 12:00 noon at the PSALM Office

References to the dates and times in this notice shall be based on Manila time. Should any of the above dates fall on a holiday, the deadline shall be extended to the same time of the immediately succeeding business day in Makati City.

A two-envelope bidding system will be adopted. Interested parties will be required to post a bid security equivalent to ten percent (10%) of the bid price in the form of an irrevocable letter of credit, which must be acceptable to the Committee. The bid security of the winning bidder shall be substituted by a performance security to guarantee prompt, faithful and complete performance of its obligations under the transaction. The details of the privatization of the Asset are contained in the Bidding Package.

Letters of Interest, Confidentiality Agreements and Undertakings shall be addressed and submitted to: The Chairman, Privatization, Bids and Awards Committee, PSALM Corporation, 7th Floor, Bankmer Building, 6756 Ayala Avenue, Makati City, Philippines. Inquiries and clarifications shall be addressed to Mr. Froilan A. Tampinco at the PSALM Office or at telefax number (632) 892-6029, or e-mail address fatampinco@psalm.gov.ph

The Committee reserves the right to accept or reject any interested party or bidder or proposals or bids therefrom, or any part thereof, and/or to waive any defects contained therein and accept the offer advantageous to the Government, without offering any reason whatsoever. It does not assume any obligation to compensate or indemnify parties for any expense or loss that they may incur as a result of their participation in the privatization process, nor does it guarantee that an award will be made. Finally, it reserves the right to modify, supplement, or change the Bidding Procedures and other aspects of the privatization process at any time, including the schedule and the venue provided herein, for any reason whatsoever and without giving prior notice. Interested parties and/or bidders will be notified subsequently of such modifications, supplements or changes.

(Sgd.) ANGELO T. REYES
Chairman
PSALM Privatization, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI– October 3, 4 & 5, 2007)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENSE
ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES
OFFICE OF THE PHILIPPINE NAVY BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
Bonifacio Naval Station, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

Supply and Delivery of Various Supplies & Materials for PMC

1. The Armed Forces of the Philippines, through the **Mobility Special Projects CY 2007**, intends to apply the sum as stated below being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the following Philippine Navy Project. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid Opening.

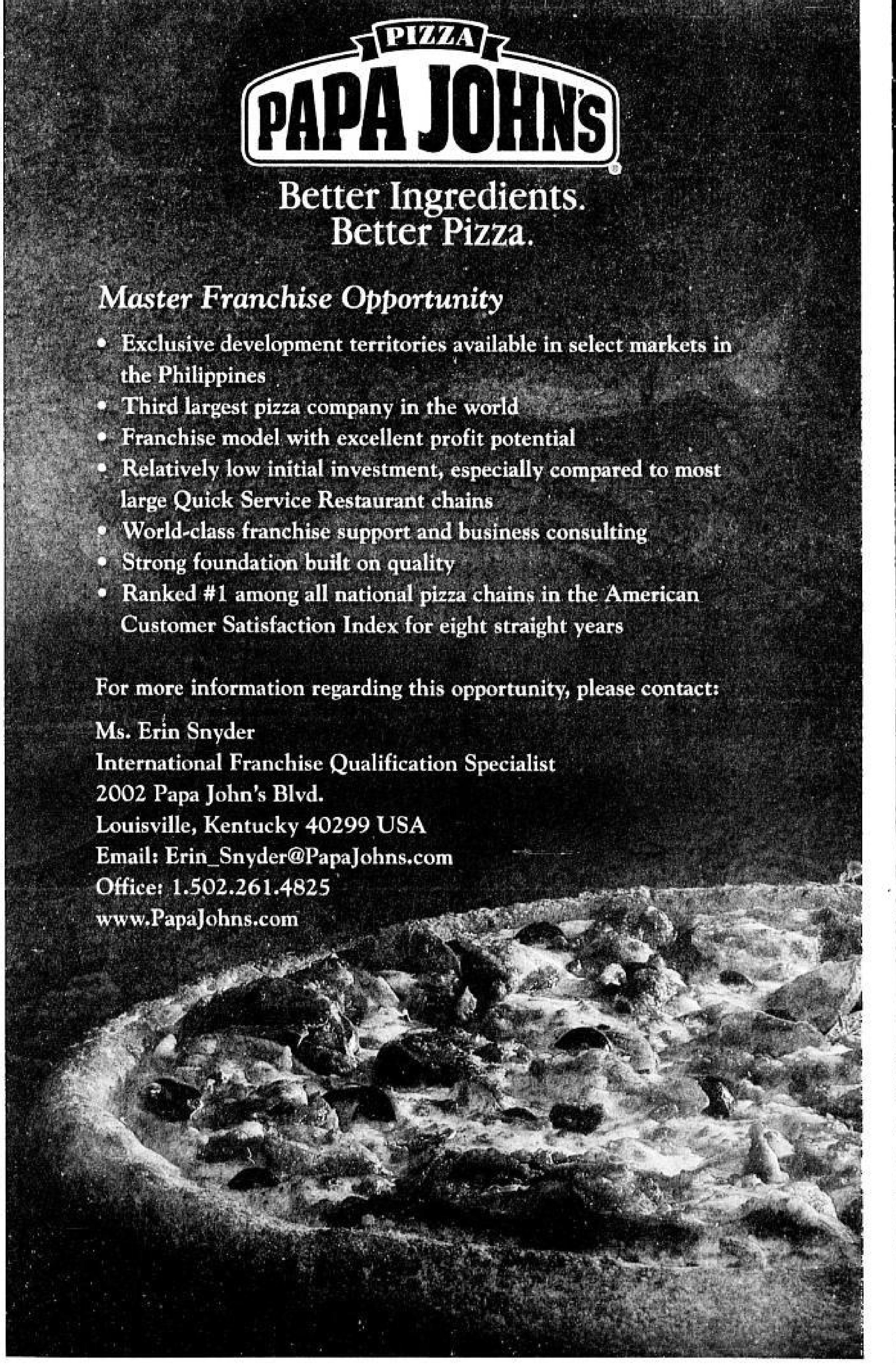
Nomenclature/Activity	Approved Budget for the Contract	Date/Time		Price of Bid Documents (non-refundable)
		Pre-Bid Conference	Deadline for Submission/ Opening of Bids	
Lot 2 Supply, Delivery and Installation of Five (5) each Electronic Control Unit (ECU) for V-300	Php 2,880,000.00	October 4, 2007 9:00 AM	October 16, 2007 9:00 AM	Php 3,000.00

2. The Armed Forces of the Philippines now invites Eligible Bidders for the **Supply and Delivery of Various Supplies and Materials for PMC**. Delivery of the goods being procured and description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II and Section III of the Bidding Documents, ITB.
3. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from PN BAC and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from ***8:00 AM to 5:00 PM*, Monday to Friday**.
4. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of *Mentioned in Para 1*. The method of payment will be *in the form of cash*. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
5. The *Armed Forces of the Philippines* will hold a **Pre-Bid Conference** open to all interested parties at **Office of the PN Bids and Awards Committee, Bonifacio Naval Station, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.**
6. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before **October 16, 2007, 9:00 A.M.** All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form of Surety Bond or Manager's Check. Late Bids shall not be accepted.
7. **Bid opening** shall be on **October 16, 2007, 9:00 AM** at **Office of the PN Bids and Awards Committee, Bonifacio Naval Station, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.** Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.
8. The Armed Forces of the Philippines reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Office of the PN Bids and Awards Committee
BNS, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City
*Contact Person: **CDR GLICERIO P VILLANUEVA PN***
Cel Nr: 0917-8599-434 / 0918-2016-522
Tel Nr: 616-8218, 815-3420, 843-4416 & 815-8093 local 6341

(Sgd.) ADRIANO V MUNAR JR
CAPT PN (GSC)
Chairman, PNBAC

(PDI–October 3, 2007)



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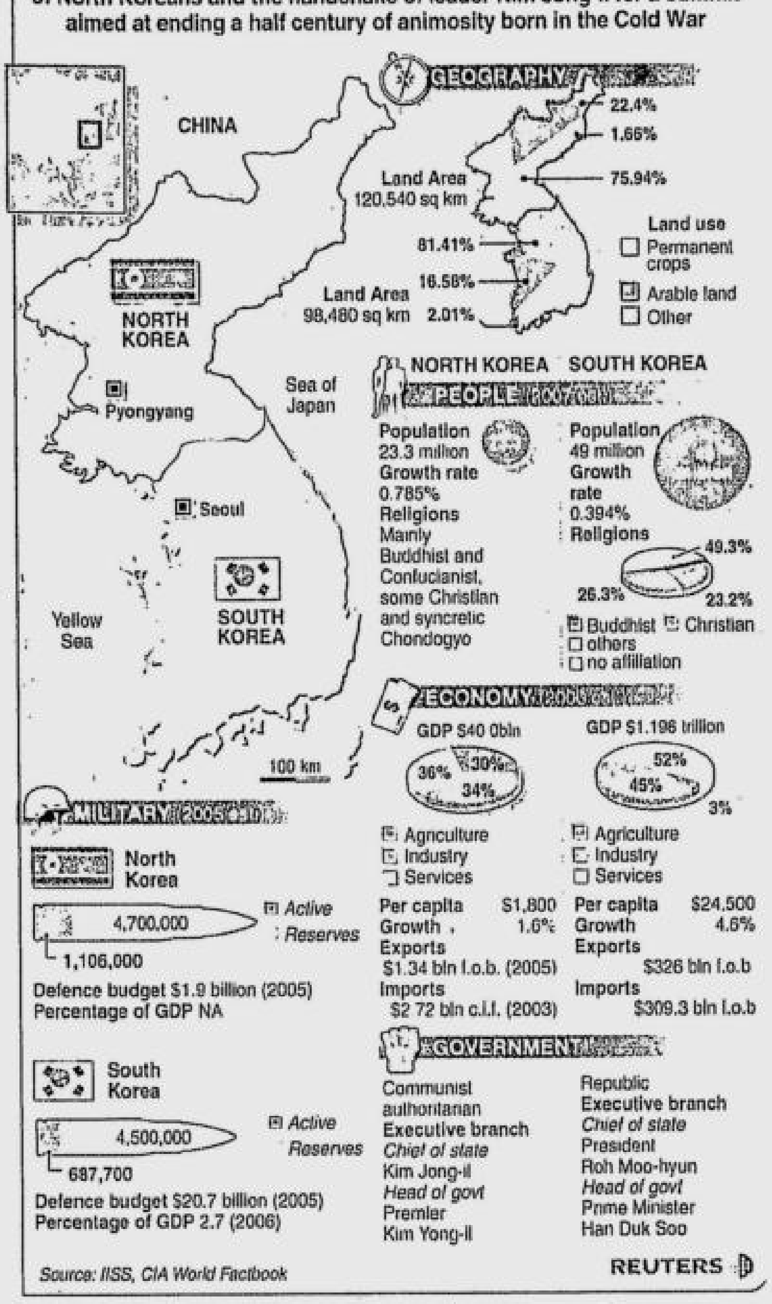
KOREAS COMPARED

South Korea's president arrived in Pyongyang on Tuesday to the cheers of North Koreans and the handshake of leader Kim Jong-il for a summit aimed at ending a half century of animosity born in the Cold War


GEOGRAPHY
CHINA
NORTH KOREA
Pyongyang
Sea of Japan
Seoul
SOUTH KOREA
Yellow Sea
100 km
Land Area 120,540 sq km
22.4%
1.65%
75.94%
81.41%
16.58%
2.01%
Land Area 98,480 sq km
Land use
☐ Permanent crops
☐ Arable land
☐ Other
NORTH KOREA
SOUTH KOREA
PEOPLE
Population 23.3 million
Growth rate 0.785%
Religions Mainly Buddhist and Confucianist, some Christian and syncretic Chondogyo
Population 49 million
Growth rate 0.394%
Religions
49.3%
26.3%
23.2%
Buddhist
Christian
☐ others
☐ no affiliation
ECONOMY
GDP $40 0bln
36%
30%
34%
GDP $1.196 trillion
52%
45%
3%
Agriculture
Industry
Services
Per capita $1,800
Growth 1.0%
Exports $1.34 bln f.o.b. (2005)
Imports $2 72 bln c.i.f. (2003)
Per capita $24,500
Growth 4.6%
Exports $326 bln f.o.b
Imports $309.3 bln f.o.b
GOVERNMENT
Communist authoritarian
Executive branch
Chief of state
Kim Jong-il
Head of govt
Premier
Kim Yong-Il
Republic
Executive branch
Chief of state
President
Roh Moo-hyun
Head of govt
Prime Minister
Han Duk Soo
MILITARY
North Korea
4,700,000
1,106,000
Active
Reserves
Defence budget $1.9 billion (2005)
Percentage of GDP NA
South Korea
4,500,000
687,700
Active
Reserves
Defence budget $20.7 billion (2005)
Percentage of GDP 2.7 (2006)

Source: IISS, CIA World Factbook

REUTERS

SURPRISE: He was more or less expected but not quite, so that when Kim Jong-il actually shows up to welcome his counterpart from the the south of the divided peninsula, the summit gets off to a rousing start. AFP

THEY'VE COME A LONG WAY: North and South Korea were proclaimed separate states in 1948, three years after the peninsula was divided between the US and Soviet zones of influence during the so-called Cold War. A

c summit

hardline policy on the North.

Reveling in the moment

Roh appeared to revel in the moment, waving and smiling broadly before reviewing a goose-stepping North Korean military honor guard wielding rifles with bayonets.

Roh has billed his first trip to the communist North as a chance to end animosity born with the partition of the Korean peninsula at the end of World War II.

But Roh's critics say the visit is aimed more at domestic politics and expect the South Korean leader to tiptoe around the sensitive issues of nuclear weapons and mass human rights abuses.

North Koreans dressed in their finest cheered on cue when Kim arrived at a main square in Pyongyang, repeating the greeting minutes later as Roh stepped out of an open car supplied by North Korea.

A portly Kim, in his trademark jumpsuit and wearing platform shoes that made him appear taller than the dark-suited Roh, shook hands unsmilingly with the South Korean leader and his wife.

Hundreds of thousands lined the streets, waving bunches of plastic flowers and shouting "hurrah" and "reunify the fatherland."

Roh has not given any specifics about what he will propose during his visit, or get in return, prompting criticism from conservatives at home that the summit is an ego trip for Roh seeking to establish a legacy for his unpopular administration that ends in February.

While the first summit was seen as a landmark event that led to an easing of tensions, the latest meeting has met a far more muted response, due to a vague agenda and doubts that Roh will be able to achieve much.

With just five months left in office, Roh has said he would use the summit to press for peace and an eventual arms cut on the peninsula where some 2 million troops face off, most of them near the border.

Peace settlement

In July, Pyongyang shut down its sole operating nuclear reactor that produced material for bombs and the country has tentatively agreed to disable its atomic facilities by year-end in a way that they cannot be easily restarted.

Before leaving the South Korean capital, Roh acknowledged that the two Koreas alone could not totally resolve the nuclear standoff or bring peace to the peninsula.

The North is involved in international talks on its nuclear weapons program including the United States and other regional powers. A peace settlement to the Korean War would require the participation of the United States and China that also fought in that conflict.

Aid pledge

"Even if we do not reach an agreement in many areas, it would still be a meaningful achievement to narrow the gap in understanding and to enhance confidence in each other," Roh said of the meeting with Kim.

Analysts say South Korea may pledge billions of dollars to help raise its communist neighbor's ruined economy.

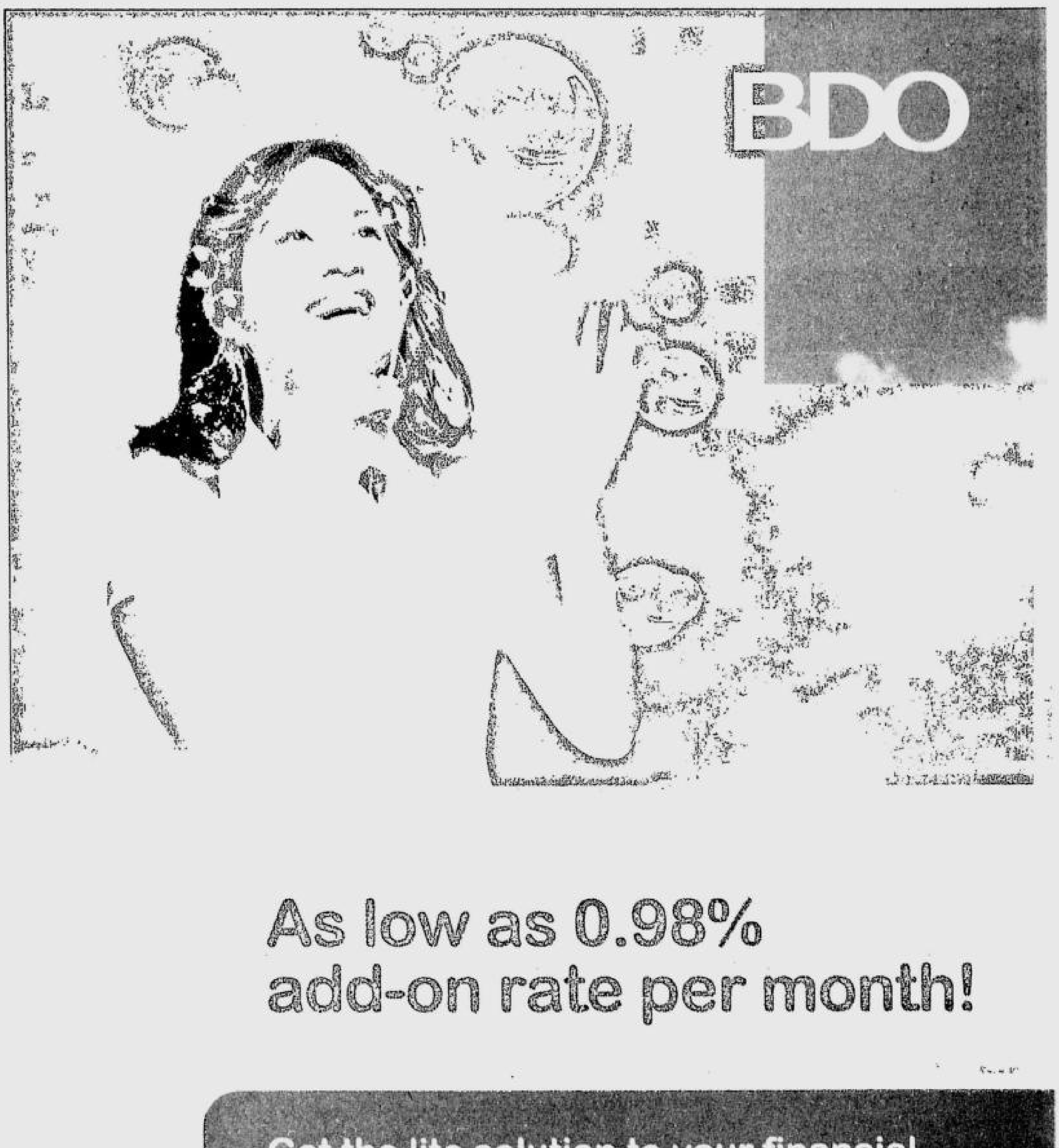
Upon entering Pyongyang, Roh switched to an open-top car and was joined by the North's No. 2 leader, Kim Yong-nam. Both rode for some 20 minutes through the North's showcase capital, waving to hundreds of thousands of residents.

Roh checked in at the North's state guest house and had a meal with his wife and a few South Korean officials. He also watched video footage of his arrival in Pyongyang, according to pool reports from the North.

Roh held talks with Kim Yong-nam later Tuesday, broadcaster APTN reported from Pyongyang, ahead of an official dinner where it was unclear if Kim Jong-il would attend. Formal talks between the two leaders begin Wednesday.

Unification dreams

Surveys show South Koreans favor the summit and eventual unification, but want the process to be gradual, fearing that the cost of absorbing the impoverished North would wreck their own economy, Asia's fourth largest. *Reports from AP and Reuters*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OPINION

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The Philippine Daily Inquirer, Inc. has its business and editorial offices at
•Chino Roces Ave corner Yague and Mascardo Sts., Makati City
•P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City
•Our telephone numbers are 897-8808 connecting all departments
•Editorial Fax 897-4793 / 897-4794 •Advertising 897-4807
•Circulation 527-3342 / 527-3348 / 528-0183 / 528-0186 and 528-0213 / Fax: 528-02-34.
•Subscription Hotline 896-6000

The battle resumes

EDITORIAL

THE WATERGATE AFFAIR, AS JOURNALISTS BOB Woodward and Carl Bernstein famously wrote, hinged on the advice, "Follow the money." The political demise of US President Richard Nixon, to whom the money trail of payoffs to silence witnesses and smear the opposition led, was encapsulated in a famous question asked in the US Congress. Faced by obvious foot-dragging (at best) and hostile invocations of executive privilege (at worst), Sen. Howard Baker relentlessly asked, during the Watergate hearings, "What did the president know and when did he know it?"

We have repeated that line, time and again, in this space. And all of Philippine media have tried to follow the money trail as it is being exposed both inside and outside the halls of Congress. Along the way, witnesses have come forward, with damning testimony, as well as an equally damning, but steadily unraveling, tangle of damning motivations and agendas, both hidden and on public display.

At the forefront of the whole drama has been the Senate, acting with a mixture of inquisitorial zeal and the most shameless—and shameful—mixture of slipshod procedures and lust for publicity. Waiting anxiously in the wings has been the House of Representatives, itself divided between partisans of President Macapagal-Arroyo and those supporting Speaker Jose de Venecia. Formerly at odds with each other, the Senate and the House are more aligned today in a common confrontation with the President.

The resignation of Benjamin Abalos as chair of the Commission on Elections has deprived the House of its chance to assert a long overdue independence from the President and her family. It is now common knowledge that even as First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo departed on a trip abroad, his sons and brother corralled congressmen in what they hoped would be the first step in toppling the Speaker. That gambit failed, but so did the Speaker's preparations to strike at Abalos by means of an impeachment. We can only infer, at this point, that the House will, for the first time during the incumbency of Ms Arroyo, wield the power of the purse by means of going through the proposed national budget with a fine-toothed comb.

This returns us to the Senate, which is due to resume its joint committee hearings on the ZTE deal. There will be two issues immediately confronting the chamber. First, allegations concerning the conduct of the executive session last Thursday. This was meant to allow senators the opportunity to understand why Chair Romulo Neri of the Commission on Higher Education invoked executive privilege just as he had tantalizingly came close to revealing that the President had said more about Abalos' bribe than just advising Neri not to accept the bribe.

Conflicting suggestions of improper behavior, either by senators or members of the Cabinet, in that executive session, have been made. One senator has asked whether these suggestions of improper, even scandalous, conduct justified the unprecedented move of some senators to reveal what took place. We say unprecedented, because the allegations of what happened during that executive session are unparalleled in the history of our Congress and perhaps any legislature in the modern era.

The second issue is whether or not to compel Neri to reveal what he knows, but won't say. Senators must decide if they will detain Neri and trigger, in turn, a case in the Supreme Court to settle, once and for all, whether the Cabinet member is right in invoking executive privilege. This is a confrontation that seems not only inevitable, but necessary. We cannot agree with Sen. Joker Arroyo that the Senate should quit while it is ahead.

It is by settling these two questions, which all hinge on Neri's possessing information as to what the President knew, and when—and what she did or did not do, knowing what she knew—that checks and balances are asserted and the parameters of democracy are more clearly established. At stake is the ability of Congress to exercise oversight, of witnesses to use legitimate legal shields or hide behind legal barriers erected to cover up official wrongdoing. There is even the possibility that Neri's value as a witness has been compromised, because he no longer has free will, and has been subjected to official intimidation—whether from the Senate, or the executive branch.

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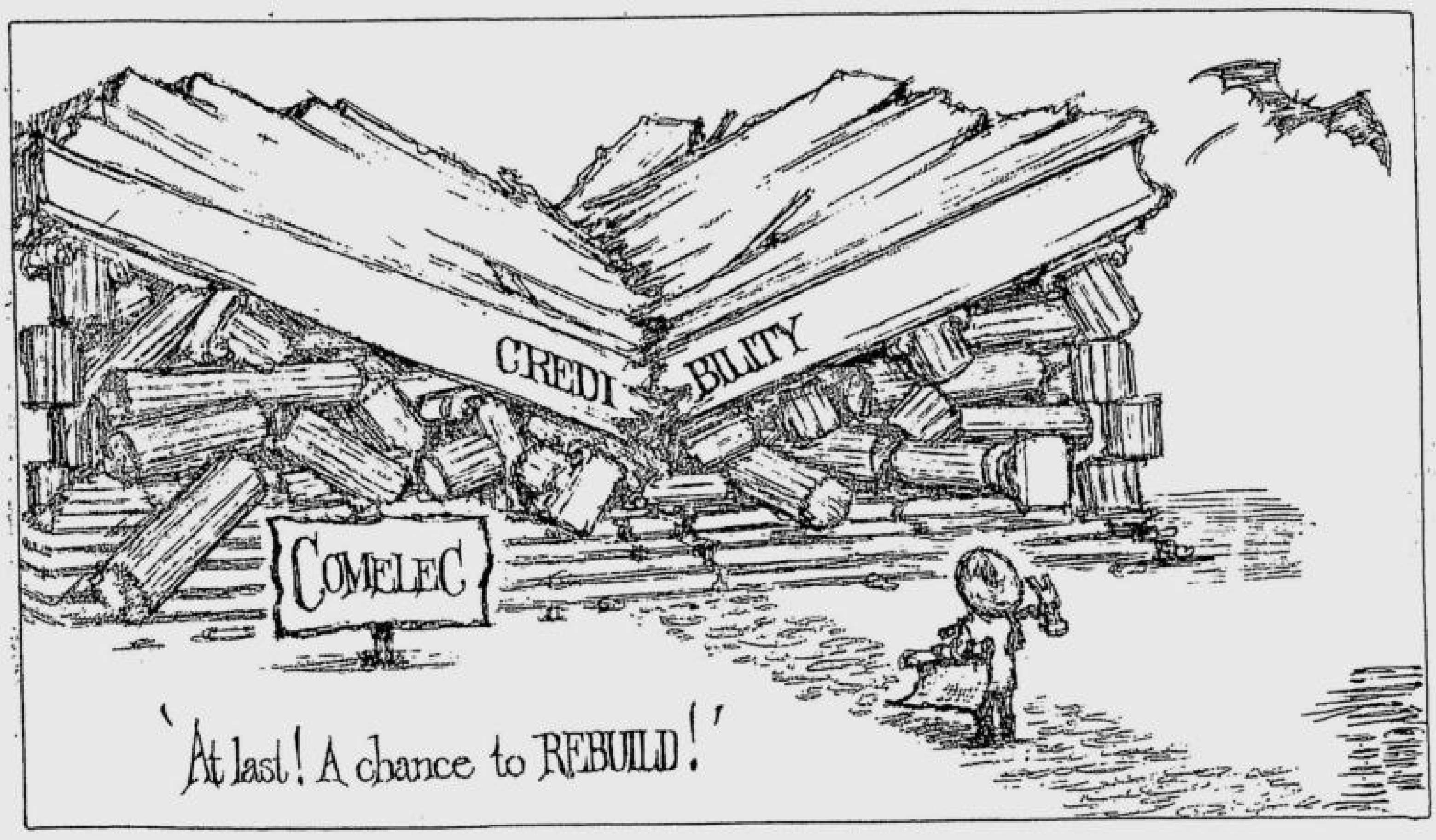
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With Abalos down, GMA is next

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

EARLY MONDAY MORNING, COMELEC CHAIR Benjamin Abalos was still in fighting form, saying over the radio that he would not resign, that he would fight the impeachment case against him. Before noon, however, he announced in a hastily called press conference that he was resigning. What happened? Why the sudden turnaround?

The official version is that members of the Abalos family, including the grandchildren, had a war council and decided that their patriarch should resign to spare the family the stress of an impeachment trial; the Comelec chairmanship was not worth all the aggravation. Anyway, he is due to retire this February, only four months away.

Good decision. But the real reason is probably that they did a head count in the House of Representatives and found out that the impeachment complaint would be able to get the 80 votes needed to send it to the Senate. And in the Senate trial, Abalos would go through the ringer, broadcast live on television, and repeated in the newscasts and newspapers. And even if there was not enough evidence to convict him, the opposition-dominated Senate would still declare him guilty. After all, in an impeachment trial, unlike in a court trial, it is not the evidence that determines the verdict but the biases of the senators. So why fight when you already know you would be defeated anyway, no matter what you do?

Also, Malacañang may have told him to resign to save the President. Like they say, poor Abalos may have been made a sacrificial lamb to satisfy the blood lust of the senators and the people. In the wild, when predators sense that a prey has been injured or weakened, they gang up on it with more ferocity. In the civilized world, that's also what they do. They have sensed blood and they will not stop until somebody falls. Malacañang probably thought that once Abalos went, the bloodlust would die down.

I don't think so. Now that Abalos is down, the opposition will turn its attention on GMA. One down, one to go. The real target is not really Abalos but GMA, the big fish. Now it will go after her with hammer and tongs.

* * *

I feel sorry and at the same time proud of the Abalos family. It is a good, close-knit family. I know some of them. Mrs. Abalos is the oldest of three beautiful sisters; the two younger ones, both widows, are my neighbors. They have children and grandchildren any parent can be proud of. They don't deserve what is being done to their patriarch.

I hope that they can rest and relax now and that the baying hounds will chase somebody else. I also hope that now that he is no longer in government, Abalos and Secretary Romulo Neri will tell the Senate everything that they know about the ZTE deal and not protect anybody. Justice and good government dictate that the bad guys should be punished and the good guys be rewarded.

As in war, retreat is the best thing to do when you are losing a battle. In resigning, Abalos avoided being impeached. If he waited until the Senate kicked him out, he would have lost not only his retirement pay but also his right to vote and to hold public office. By resigning, he salvaged all of these.

Abalos is a good man. I wish him the best.

* * *

Expect electric rates to go up again with the rise in oil prices. And expect Napocor and Meralco to blame each other again for the increase. The Epira was passed to make competition reduce prices. But what Napocor and Meralco are doing is compete in heaping blame on each other. The Epira has not done what it was supposed to do. Power rates are going up, not down. So there is a move in Congress to amend it. Napocor wants it amended; Meralco doesn't want it touched.

Napocor says the Epira is failing because of cross ownership wherein a distribution utility (DU) like Meralco can own, or have sister companies, in generation. Then the DU can buy electricity at high rates from its sister companies and make its customers pay for the high costs. The original version of Epira banned cross-ownership, but due to Meralco's lobbying, an exception was made in the case of DUs and independent power producers (IPPs).

Meralco says it is because the Epira is not being implemented fully and on time, especially in the privatization of Napocor's generation plants, that the cost of electricity is rising. From the timelines in the law, Meralco says, 70 percent of Napocor's assets and IPP contracts should have been in private hands three years after the law's passage, or by 2004. And 100 percent of Napocor should have been sold eight years after, or by 2009.

But today, Meralco says, only 28 percent of Napocor's 3,500 megawatts has been sold and if we consider the 6,900 megawatts of contracts still to be sold to "IPP administrators," only a total of 9 percent of assets and contracts have been privatized. It is still a long way before the 70 percent threshold can be reached and consumers can choose suppliers under what the law calls "open access." And of course, having open access and competition will not be meaningful until 70 percent of state-owned Napocor is privatized and its market share is safely below the 30 percent market dominance cap imposed by law.

Meralco also says the brownouts that plagued the Luzon grid last summer were caused by intentionally low coal inventories at the major coal plants of Napocor and its IPPs (Napocor still procures the coal for all of them). To cure the self-inflicted shortages, Napocor made emergency coal purchases that were awarded to favored suppliers, bypassing normal procurement procedures, Meralco says. They were bought at sky-high prices ranging between $80 and $125 per metric ton (as opposed to the usual $60 price). Of course, the consumers end up footing the bill.

Saving the Queen

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

FRANKLY, I CANNOT UNDERSTAND THE REactions of people to the resignation of Benjamin Abalos.

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines says, "Thank God, Mr. Abalos responded to our prayers," and his example "should be followed by other public officials." Of course, I completely agree that other officials associated with wrongdoing would do well to resign, chief of them the No. 1 conspirator in this country whose name is associated with the two Senate hearings involving monumental perfidy, the ZTE scandal and the reopening of the "Hello, Garci" tape based on Vidal Doble's testimony, and that is Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. But before Abalos resigned, he also tried—by the unassailed and unassailable testimony of the former Neda chief—to buy him off with P200 million.

I don't know why anyone should laud any subsequent action Abalos might have taken in light of that, or go on to set him up for emulation. The point is not for him to resign, the point is for us to prosecute him, and where found guilty—as he should—jail him.

And why on earth would anybody imagine that Abalos' departure from the Comelec would naturally make the Comelec better, or as a couple of people put it, give it a chance at reform? Alberto Lim of the Makati Business Club says there will be two vacancies in the Comelec early next year which should give Malacañang the chance to appoint officials who are "competent, with probity and credibility." Henrietta de Villa says Abalos' problems had "hampered the Comelec from doing its job," and with his resignation, we can now proceed to conduct "clean and credible elections."

Well, who in God's name appointed Abalos, and coddled him after he had bungled, wittingly or unwittingly, deal after deal costing the taxpayers billions of pesos, chief of them awarding the computerization of canvassing to a company that was not fit to bid; after he had shamelessly made Miguel Zubiri a senator of this land at the expense of Aquilino Pimentel III by insisting on counting the tainted Maguindanao votes and after meeting with Zubiri's father in Shangri-La (he also has a habit of bumping into the wrong people at the wrong time, which is really for him the right people at the right time); after the Neda chief reported him to his boss as offering him a couple of hundred million pesos as though it were his to give? The same person Lim and De Villa now expect to appoint competent, honest and credible officials.

Incidentally, that was an eye-popping remark by De Villa: "With his resignation, we can now proceed to conduct clean and credible elections." That's as clear an admission as any that it was impossible to have that while Abalos was there. But which again brings us to why he was there in the first place and has been there all this time: Which is that the person who appointed him and kept him there wanted him to not conduct clean and credible elections. Which is that the person who appointed him and kept him there would never have been in any position to appoint or keep anyone if he had merely conducted clean and credible elections, particularly in 2004.

The enthused or relieved cries over Abalos' resignation, and the praises that have even managed to go his way, merely point to the one toxic element that has poisoned the thinking of this country, which is the toxic element of "moving on." That notion says there is no sense in dwelling on a crime, which is just crying over spilt milk, let's forget the whole thing, start from scratch, and just make sure the crime doesn't happen again. Abalos may be guilty of all of the above, but he has resigned, so let's forget about him—and the person who made sure he would commit his crimes—and concentrate on having clean elections from now on.

For the strangest reasons, in this Alice-in-Wonderland country, that gets to be praised as "positive thinking." Positive, my foot. You do not examine the causes of a crime, that crime will happen again and again. More to the point, you do not punish the criminals, their crime will happen again and again.

We prosecuted Erap and jailed him. Why the hell can't we do the same thing to Abalos and his boss?

I myself find nothing laudable in Abalos' resignation. It isn't merely that it is force majeure (what else can he do in light of Neri's revelations?), it is that he has obviously been pressured into doing it by Malacañang. GMA can no more afford to have Abalos impeached than she could afford to have Erap acquitted. Either one would have frayed out whatever thread of legitimacy she was hanging on to.

Impeaching Abalos would have raised several questions she could never answer. The least of them is what the Comelec chief was doing brokering a deal that had nothing to do with elections. By his own admission in the Senate, he knows nothing about telecommunications. Yet, by Neri's suggestion, he stood enough to profit from it to go around offering P200-million bribes. There is no escaping the conclusion that the ZTE deal was his reward for services rendered as Comelec chief. An impeachment would have given the public to see what those services were and whom they benefited.

The most important of those questions is why Congress is impeaching Abalos and not GMA. Helloing Garci is an infinitely graver crime than whispering sweet nothings to Neri's ear, and in any case GMA continues to be implicated in Abalos' own crime. There is no escaping the conclusion either that in Joe de Venecia's House, the only two house rules are: "Where there's no will, there's no way (GMA)," and "Where there's a way, there's a will (Abalos)."

The whole ploy reeks of "God save the Queen." But I doubt God, though he moves in mysterious ways, will want to have his name affixed to any of this.

Life is cheap in Burma

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE CONDEMNATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL community of the brutal slaughter of monks and common people demanding an end to four decades of Burmese military dictatorship is resonant with sound and fury but has not softened the mailed fist of the ruling junta.

More than 4,000 monks, who led two weeks of protests in Rangoon and some cities, have been rounded up from their monasteries and held at an unused race course and a technical college, Financial Times correspondents in Rangoon report. The detained monks will be sent to prisons in the northern part of the country.

The junta admits that 13 people were killed when troops cold-bloodedly fired into protesters in central Rangoon two weeks ago, but diplomats report that after the massacre, the protests have subsided amid heavy military presence in the streets.

Burmese diplomats at the United Nations General Assembly said normalcy had returned to Burma and the security force had exercised "utmost restraint," while diplomats in Rangoon and human rights groups claim the death toll could run into hundreds.

The price of life in Burma is cheap. According to correspondents' reports from Rangoon, the army paid 20,000 kyats (about $15 or P675) in compensation to families of men shot in last week's carnage before confiscating the corpses.

In a country, where 90 percent of the population of 50 million are Buddhists, there are 400,000 monks, including novices, and there are as many soldiers. The monks represent the strongest countervailing institution to the military dictatorship. But the monks are largely pacific and are not armed. Their influence among the impoverished Burmese people, living in abject poverty in sharp contrast to their corrupt and high-living generals, helps explain why they are the main target of the crackdown and it makes sense to the junta to disperse them to prisons outside the capital.

Interventions by the United Nations, the European Union, the major Western democracies, mainly the United States and Britain, not to mention the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, have failed to isolate Burma internationally and to prompt the junta to come to a reconciliation with the prodemocracy forces led by Aung San Suu Kyi.

The UN special envoy, Ibrahim Gambari arrived in Rangoon from Singapore last weekend, with an urgent mission from the Security Council, to establish a dialogue between Suu Kyi and the generals that might result in a political compromise. He has been cooling his heels for an audience with the junta leader, Gen. Than Shwe, after being allowed to with Suu Kyi, who is being held in a villa near the government guest house. Gambari has so far met only civilian Cabinet ministers.

The long wait of Gambari has been interpreted as a sign of tensions inside the junta over the crackdown. The members of the junta are believed to have failed to agree on a common response to the smoldering protest movement. This interpretation leans toward the optimistic view that a split in the junta would precipitate a coup against the hard-liners led by Than Shwe, and force the junta to negotiate with Suu Kyi.

International pressure on Burma is not biting, despite the the angry rhetoric, because the main trading partners of Burma, who could exert leverage on the junta to open up the political system for participation by the opposition National League for Democracy Party, have extensive investments in Burma. The party won the 1990 parliamentary elections by a landslide, but it was not allowed to take power, and many of its leaders were jailed, including Suu Kyi who has spent 12 of the last 18 years under house arrest.

The strongest condemnation came from the United States and Britain. US President George W. Bush announced new sanctions, including a ban on visas and a freeze of the assets of 14 Burmese officials. British Prime Minister Gordon Brown said, "I want to see all the pressures of the world put on this regime now—sanctions, the pressure of the UN, pressure from China and all the countries in the region, India, pressure from the whole world."

The junta has disdainfully brushed aside all these angry words. It knows that in 1997, the United States banned new investments in Burma, and in 2003 it banned most Burmese imports and transactions. Britain no longer has any large-scale investments in Burma. European Union sanctions have been in place for years, when the EU banned arms sales and expelled military attachés and it froze the assets of some members of the junta. It withdrew preferential trade status with Burma. But these sanctions have failed to isolate or hurt Burma economically.

The United States realizes it has a weak leverage to influence the junta, and this is the reason Bush called on "all nations that have influence with the regime to join us in supporting the aspirations of the Burmese people and to tell the Burmese junta to cease using force on its own people." These include China, India and Japan, all of which have substantial investments in Burma in exchange for access to its vast oil and off-shore gas resources.

China, which needs Burma's fuel resources for its rapidly developing economy and energy-hungry industries, managed a weak protest by saying it "hopes that all parties in Myanmar will exercise restraint and properly handle the current issue."

Burma has become the Great Game in the scramble among Asian powers for access to its resources. The junta is playing this card to the hilt to keep power and to suppress the democracy movement in Burma. The position of Asean, of which Burma is a member, on the crackdown is the most innocuous. The hypocrisy of Asean will be examined in the next column.

A window of opportunity

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

NOW THAT CHAIR BENJAMIN ABALOS HAS FInally resigned from the Comelec, he leaves a window of opportunity for all well-meaning individuals, including, because hope springs eternal, the appointing power, to create a "new and refreshed" Comelec.

With the vacancy created by Abalos, and many commissioners retiring in the next few months, President Macapagal-Arroyo and her advisers have the chance to appoint a whole new board of commissioners (or at least a majority) who can truly transform the Comelec into an independent, non-partisan poll body by adopting the necessary reforms in our electoral system.

The most pressing of these reforms is computerization, reducing, if not eliminating entirely, the human "hands" that get in contact with ballots, tally sheets, canvassing forms, statements—and in the process manage to lose, replace, revise, and reconfigure them and thus turn our elections into a sham.

True, we have been warned that computerization alone won't be able to wipe out all forms of fraud or cheating. There are the "hands" (and duplicitous brains) involved, after all, in preparing the basic program that will run the software involved in reading and counting the ballots. Or even before then, the "hands" involved in preparing the registration rolls, which are the basic material on which clean, honest and credible elections are based. Still, computerization would make for a good start, and we can input all the protection measures we want right now, while we still have time to choose and pick among the many voting programs available.

Sen. Dick Gordon, whose pet measure has been computerized voting, says we don't even have to write new programs or choose from among untested models. All around the world are computerized voting and counting systems that have long been used and proven successful. In Hawaii, for instance, he saw voting computers that even provided Ilocano translations of the instructions.

* * *

SO what are we waiting for? Gordon said, during the run-up to last May's elections, that there were funds available for a test run—which the Comelec refused to implement – as well as for the national adoption of automated elections. The mandate for computerizing voting and ballot counting is more than a decade old, and in fact has already been amended.

We have the implementing law, we have the funds, and we have many eager aspirants, Filipinos as well as foreigners, offering their software and hardware to the Comelec. Of course, we also have the MegaPacific deal hanging like an ominous shadow over the entire move to computerize the polls.

But that contract, voided by the Supreme Court, was anomalous only because it was overpriced, didn't go through the normal legal processes of bidding, and was going to be implemented by a company that was both underfunded and incapable of meeting the technical demands of the project. The justices were of the opinion that this anomalous transaction would not have been possible were it not for the consent, if not collusion, of Comelec officials, none of whom were found liable by the Ombudsman. And that's why the pending replacement of the present crew of Comelec leaders is really the first step toward not just computerization but broader reforms.

* * *

SO what's holding us back?

Our lawmakers, as well as Malacañang, have kept a deafening silence on the issue, which is strange because President Arroyo herself, during her first term, declared that computerized elections were a priority. And, judging from the thunder and lightning emanating from candidates and supporters in the period leading to, during and after the voting, you would think they would go for computerization at the drop of a hat.

But the reality is that cheating benefits candidates, and has become in this country a not-so-little industry in itself. The possibility of eking out an electoral victory in the last few days of canvassing by "tweaking" the results continues to tantalize moist-eyed aspirants, who would not want their defeat in the polls "prematurely" sealed by quick and objective counting machines.

And what are we to do with the watchers and representatives, as well as the members of boards of canvassers, who stand to make tidy incomes by playing their designated roles in "ensuring" the right results? Goons and guns have largely been rendered inutile in reversing election results, except perhaps in the usual "hot spots" where rivals are conveniently put out of commission, but surely even private armies would resent the loss of any extra seasonal income.

* * *

WE are these days facing a real turning point in our history as a democracy. We have the opportunity, depending on the men and women chosen by the President to take the reins of the Comelec, to either turn it into an efficient, credible, and reliable poll monitor, or into the same, if not worse, business-as-usual Comelec whose oversight duties over the past elections have either been sloppy or corrupt.

But let's say GMA surprises even the cynics and finds individuals of rectitude and independence to appoint to the Comelec. These people would then have to find the motivation to go against tradition and inertia induced by familiarity, and begin the process of transition into automated polls. They would have to withstand all sorts of temptation, too, and develop enough independence of spirit to ignore the pleas of influence peddlers, whose numbers and strength seem to be increasing steadily under the Arroyo administration.

Our hope—and it is a faint hope—rests finally on the assumption that Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo will be brave enough to act against her own interests.

Memories of a Pandaqueño

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

TEN YEARS AGO, I HAD A CORNER OFFICE AT the top floor of the former Philippine National Bank Building on Escolta, facing the Pasig River. That room had a spectacular view of the city, which was a real joy. I positioned the table so that I could look up from my desk to see boats and water lilies traveling out into Manila Bay, passing by the back of the Manila Post Office and Fort Santiago, or these watercraft going the other way past Quiapo Bridge toward San Miguel. On a clear day, one could see the Manila City Hall, the National Museum, the walls and watchtowers of Intramuros. No wonder Emilio Aguinaldo did not finish college, since he would skip classes in Letran, sit on the walls of Intramuros and watch boats on the Pasig, just as fascinated as I was.

The view from this room made life and work worth all the trouble. I could only imagine what paintings this same vista would have inspired in artists like Federico Aguilar Alcuaz, E. Aguilar Cruz, Sofronio Y. Mendoza (SYM), or Romulo Galicano who once made cityscapes of Manila from high-rise buildings.

Escolta was historical. There was a marker on the PNB building that associated the place with Trinidad H. Pardo de Tavera whose family owned a lot of properties here. There was small Callejon de Paz nearby that could have been associated with Paz Pardo de Tavera, the ill-fated wife of Juan Luna whom he shot dead in a jealous rage.

Unfortunately, Escolta had seen better days. It used to be the commercial and business district of the Philippines till it was replaced by redeveloped swampland in Makati during the 1960s.

With Escolta as my base, I explored other districts on foot, window-shopping in Santa Cruz and Quiapo, eating in Binondo. The street names were historical, but then many of these have been renamed, cutting us off from the past. I will deal with this in another column because I want to share one of the numerous responses to the column on Pandacan street names.

Rene Ciria-Cruz, aka Inidoro Delihencia, wrote:

"I'm writing because I'm from Pandacan. My family is rooted there. On our street T.S. Luis (used to be Fraternidad) Imelda's 'ancestral' house stands on the corner in front of the Roman Catholic Church on Jesus Street. The left turn you took from Nagtahan going towards Beata has the ruins of Jacinto Zamora's house. It is now a historical park. On the same street is the site of composer Ladislao Bonus' house, just two houses away from ours. It is said that Rizal used to visit Bonus in an effort to put one of his poems to music. Beata was named after a *beaterio* near the Pasig River's confluence with an estero now named after Balagtas. It was a choice spot for country houses of the old rich, when the Pasig River and the estero were still pleasant and Pandacan was still a suburb of Manila.

"Around Beata, German immigrants set up a button factory, and on Inviernes St. (your way out to Santa Ana, and which most likely has been renamed by our philistines) were genteel estates. I read in a book that the huge parcel of land there was once owned by an American who hailed from Inverness, in the San Francisco Bay Area. He supposedly named his estate Inviernes.

"Peñafrancia is the spot between Pandacan and Paco, starting with the current site of the Philippine Columbian. The Laurels lived near there. At the foot of Nagtahan bridge, near the Mabini Shrine, was the site of the Spanish gunpowder shed/armory where local Katipuneros were imprisoned and executed. They reportedly started the uprising a bit before Bonifacio's declaration and were smashed.

"I believe that around the same area was the site of the English Club, where Anglo-Saxon expatriates had a dormitory.

"The first known leader of Pandacan, a Muslim by the name of Pedro Balingit, got involved in a rebellion plot and was exiled to New Spain (Mexico, right?). A rebellion of women is said to have taken place at the Catholic church near the turn of the last century. A lascivious Spanish priest was known for asking very intimate questions of women, especially newlyweds. So a group of women locked him out, drove him out of town and invited Gregorio Aglipay to officiate. Thus began the Aglipayan Church in Pandacan (on Labores Street, a long block away from the Catholic one). My mother's family is Aglipayan.

"The town has two fiesta celebrations around Jan. 14. It sometimes was held jointly, but nowadays, apparently a week or two separates the two celebrations of the same patron, Santo Niño. During the Easter *Salubong*, two processions used to meet: Mary in one, Jesus in another. Having been away so long, I don't know if it's still done that way.

"One of the continuing controversies is which has the original Santo Niño statue. The scuttlebutt in my family is that the Aglipayans have it secreted somewhere because my great-grandfather stole it to give to his *querida*, an Aglipayan. Who knows? It was like a Peyton Place.

"There are Tagalog words that only Pandaqueños use, e.g., *tereret* for *matamis sa bao*, *iklog* for *itlog*. Anyway, should we meet again, you can ask me more questions."

Growing up in a historic district gives one a sense of history that grows fonder when one lives far away. But when street names are changed at whim, the past remains but a faint memory.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

Wanted: female

I KNEW I'D CATCH YOUR ATTENTION THERE, BUT THE TItle isn't meant to be personal. I am referring instead to a very noticeable trend, in the Philippines, toward the preferential hiring of women. The traditional female domains are still there, such as in teaching and nursing, but you'll also find women "invading" many male job niches. To give just one example, there are more gasoline stations now that are hiring women as attendants. One time I stopped at one station where all the attendants were women.

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

Don't think now of those controversial wash-your-car women that made it into the news a few years ago, hired with less than noble intentions in mind. The women in gasoline stations are clearly being hired not to charm customers but because they are efficient. No idling around, no gossiping.

The Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ) had a recent feature article by Jaileen F. Jimeno in August that was appropriately titled "Favored as Boys, Disadvantaged as Men." It took off from Bureau of Labor and Employment statistics showing that in 2006 there were only 1.6 million males in supervisory positions, compared to 2.2 million females. Jimeno quoted one executive, Mercy Abad, as saying: "The writings on the wall are there. Women are taking over. Our men are not prepared to compete with the women."

Reading Jimeno's article got me to thinking not just of the gender distribution in supervisory positions but in the labor force in general. More and more women are working outside the home, and they're being snapped up for jobs much more quickly than the men are. Sometimes, employers will be quite explicit in stating a preference for females. I saw a newspaper ad recently for Kumon instructors which had female as its first qualification. The reasons for this preference vary, but they include diligence, higher work productivity, even honesty.

Many professions traditionally identified with males are also becoming feminized. Jimeno mentioned how law schools now have more women students. I've seen the medical schools' gender ratio shifting through the years so that today, I'd estimate that women constitute 60 to 70 percent of the students. Again, women make it into these schools because they're willing to put in the extra time and effort required for these courses.

Spoiled brats

Jimeno and several of the people she interviewed blamed the loss of the male advantage in jobs on the way we raise our sons. Boys are pampered when they're growing up, so that they end up unreliable when they become adults, with higher absenteeism and work lapses.

I agree, having written about a "spoiled brat syndrome" that is transmitted from one generation to another, through the mother. A man ends up irresponsible because he's raised that way. He marries and neglects his wife, who then pours all her affection on her sons, pampering and privileging them and effectively raising another generation of spoiled brats who will once again neglect their wives. Guess what these wives are going to do?

It's especially bad with low-income families, and it often starts at a very young age. Watch the mothers when they pick up their children in public schools; you'll find there's preferential treatment for the sons. I've seen little boys running up to their mothers and dropping their backpacks at the feet of their mother, knowing she's going to pick them up and carry them home.

When the sons become adolescents, the impoverished women will scrimp and save to give them an allowance they will squander on clothes and "good time."

Why do the mothers do this? They're scared to death about losing their son. "Who will take care of me when I'm old?" mothers tell me, and I have to counsel them, "You spoil your son now and that's the best way of making sure you'll grow into old age without them . . . or worse, you'll be 70 years old and still supporting the useless jerk." (It sounds better in Filipino but isn't quite suitable for print.)

We should be careful though not to blame mothers with this syndrome. There's a broader social context here. If our men seem so irresponsible in the domestic sphere, it is because society actually demands that they be "politicians," building up networks and spheres of influence. As boys, they're not just privileged in being exempted from domestic chores, they are actually sent out of the house, expected to go off and play basketball with the other boys, or go off with other male relatives to do, well, "male" things.

And what skills do our young boys pick up this way? *Diskarte* or learning to impress other people. That includes the girls they want to court, and the other males in their *barkada* or in other networks. It's mastering "*pare*" talk and the swagger. It's learning to binge on alcohol. It's taking risks; you see that every day with young boys daring each other to dash out into the streets and dodge the cars. It's all part of proving one's masculinity, an early initiation into street culture and machismo.

Unfortunately, such "skills" are quite useless in the modern work place. The skills and attitudes that employers want are those which the girls get while doing their household chores: industry and perseverance, attention to detail.

Have you noticed too how many work places hire mainly women—and *bakla*? I don't mean gay men in general, but the more feminized males, who sometimes even report for work in women's clothes. Such *bakla* are favored because they've internalized female work values. You won't find women or *bakla* sleeping on the job.

Hope

Is there hope then for our males? I think so. I don't believe that women are "by nature" more industrious and conscientious. Social norms change. In tribal societies, men needed to spend time building alliances within and between villages. Today, a master of *diskarte* might find his job opportunities limited mainly to the sales sector and even there, he will face stiff competition from women.

What could happen is that today's labor demands will force men to change. An example is the nursing profession, which until a few years ago was predominantly female. Males avoided the profession because it was always presumed you had to be gay if you wanted to become a nurse. Today, there are many more non-gay men going into nursing, mainly because it's the way to get a job overseas. But to become a good nurse, the men are learning that they have to pick up the work habits and attitudes of their sisters and mothers. I suspect some families even consciously train their sons to become more nurturing, more adept at domestic tasks.

Who knows, too, with the rise in popularity of professions related to the hospitality industry—from hotel and restaurant management to "culinary arts"—we might also find more households allowing their boys to take up domestic chores and pick up good work habits.

Families have to think hard about the harm they do when they raise boys to become, well, big boys. There's a world out there that needs mature women—and men.

Evil prevails too often in RP

EDMUND BURKE'S OBSERVATION That "All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing" is a daily indictment against us Filipinos. In the struggle between good and evil, it seems that even though those who profess to be good seem to clearly outnumber those who are evil, yet those who are evil seem to prevail far too often—because good men and women who know what to do decline to do what they ought to. The words from scripture aptly affirm this. "Anyone, then who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins." (James 4:17)

The incidence of corruption, scandals and irregularities by unscrupulous individuals in government continues to rise with impunity because good men and women leave alone those who commit scandalous deeds by just standing idly by, like mere spectators.

Watching the recent Senate hearings, I was dismayed by the decision of some senators to walk out or withdraw from the discussion when an opportunity to expose those committing corruption, bribery, lying and other crimes offered itself. I can understand their frustrations, but instead of walking out or refraining from asking questions, I expected them to ferret out the truth. And they would have done the Filipino people a favor.

I was also hoping to hear full and honest disclosures by witnesses; instead I heard one invoking executive privilege, thereby succeeding in hiding the truth. When good men hide the truth, evil will triumph. Preacher Wayne Greeson said, "When good men and women do nothing, they get nothing good done. Seldom is it that numbers determine the outcome, but whether those who claim to be good men and women are willing to stand up and fight for what they know to be right. Evil, sin and sinful men must be opposed. God commands those who are good not just to avoid evil but to actively oppose it."

Finally, another observation by Edmund Burke is worth mentioning: "When bad men combine, the good must associate; else they will fall one by one, an unpitied sacrifice in a contemptible struggle."

—REV. RONNY L. LUCES,
associate minister, Jaro Evangelical Church,
chair, advocacy committee,
Convention Baptist Minister's Association (CBMA)

Republic of the Philippines
National Power Corporation

October 1, 2007

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Restoration of Damaged Roofing and Sidings of Plants B & C for Makban GPP Complex

The National Power Corporation (NPC) invites all potential Bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the Restoration of Damaged Roofing and Sidings of Plants B and C for Makban GPP Complex located at Calauan, Laguna. The source of funds for the Contract to be bid shall come from the Internal Cash Generation of NPC.

Bidding will be conducted thru open competitive bidding procedure as specified in the IRR-A of R.A. 9184 and is restricted to organizations with at least seventy-five percent (75%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to the citizens of the Republic of the Philippines. Bidders must have completed a similar contract within the last fifteen (15) years with a value of at least 50% of the ABC and meet the other minimum eligibility requirements stated in the eligibility documents. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening.

The scope of works shall essentially consist of but not limited to the following: Removal/dismantling of all damaged roofing & siding materials and insulations for Plants B & C; repair and/or straightening of reusable sheets; replacement and/or restoration of roofing, sidings & eaves of Plants B & C, cleaning of roofing & sidings from debris, and all other works necessary to complete a dependable and reliable protective covering for the power plants.

Interested Bidders shall secure the eligibility documents at the Bids and Contracts Services Department (BCSD), G/F, Bldg. 1, National Power Corporation, BIR Rd. corner Quezon Ave., Diliman, Quezon City 1100 with Telefax No. (632) 922-1622 upon presentation of Letter of Intent and current Contractor's License.

The Eligibility & Bidding requirements and schedule of activities are as follows:

Contract Number - LuzP07Z134Sr	
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC): P14,716,000.00	
Contractor's PCAB License Registration Particulars	At least "Category B" - General Building And at least "Medium A" - Building and Industrial Plant
Issuance of Eligibility Documents	Oct. 3, 2007 at BCSD, NPC Bldg., Q.C.
Submission of Eligibility Documents	Oct. 17, 2007, 9:30AM, Panagbenga Rm., NPC Bldg., Q.C.
Issuance of Bidding Documents	Oct. 24, 2007, at BCSD, NPC Bldg., Q.C.
Pre-bid Conference	Oct. 31, 2007, 9:30AM at Morones Rm., NPC Bldg., Q.C.
Submission and Opening of Bids	Nov. 16, 2007, 9:30AM at Morones Rm., NPC, Q.C.
Contract Duration	One Hundred Twenty (120) calendar days
Cost of Eligibility Documents	P1,500.00 (Non-refundable)
Cost of Bidding Documents	P10,000.00 (Non-refundable)

Applications for eligibility will be evaluated based on non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria prescribed in the eligibility documents. Only Bidders who passed the eligibility check can purchase the Bidding Documents.

NPC reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder(s).

(Sgd.) J.C. J. GUADARRAMA
VP & Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - October 3, 2007)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Philippine Sugar Center Bldg., North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. No. (02) 453-3900/981-3800 to 30
Website: www.nfa.gov.ph

ANNOUNCEMENT OF BIDDING

The **National Food Authority (NFA)** wishes to announce that it will be conducting a bidding on **October 23, 2007; 10:00 a.m.** at the SRA Social Hall, Philippine Sugar Center Building, North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City, among all interested corn suppliers for the **supply of 70,000 MT, Maximum, Yellow Corngrains Equivalent to US Grade No. 2 and 3 or better from either USA, Argentina, China and Thailand, in bags or in bulk,** with an appropriated budget from corporate resources of **Php 982.8 Million**. The arrival period shall be **Not Later Than (NLT) December 31, 2007.**

All interested suppliers are required to submit quotations in bags and in bulk or both in US$/MT, CFR, FO on the basis of Documents against Acceptance (D/A) with a tenor of fifteen (15) banking days from receipt by NFA of the complete set of original documents required for payment.

All bidders are required to post a bid bond equivalent to 3% of the highest value of offered quantity in the form of cashier's/manager's check issued by a reputable bank in Metro Manila or an irrevocable standby Letter of Credit issued by a reputable commercial bank or in the case of an irrevocable stand-by L/C issued by a foreign bank, the same shall be confirmed by a reputable local bank.

Winning bidders are required to submit a performance bond equivalent to 10% of the value of the awarded quantity within five (5) banking days after receipt of the notice of award in the form cashier's/manager's check issued by a reputable bank in Metro Manila or an irrevocable stanby Letter of Credit issued by a reputable commercial bank or in the case of an irrevocable stand-by L/C issued by a foreign bank, the same shall be confirmed by a reputable local bank.

Supplier/s with pending import-related accounts/liability with NFA are considered to have bad track record and are not allowed to participate in the bid.

List of Eligibility Requirements and Instructions to Bidders may be secured starting **October 03, 2007** thru **MR. CARLITO G. CO**, Assistant Department Manager and **MR. NESTOR U. PUANGCO**, Division Chief III, **Directorate for Marketing Operations, 4th Floor, Left Wing, Philippine Sugar Center Bldg., North Ave., Diliman, Quezon City with telephone numbers 454-1890 and 920-0651.**

The Terms of Reference (TOR) will be available from **October 03, 2007 up to October 22, 2007** except Saturdays, Sundays and holidays (8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.) upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P10,000.00.

The **pre-bidding conference** will be held on October 10, 2007 at **10:00 a.m.** at the **SRA Social Hall, Philippine Sugar Center Building, North Ave., Diliman, Quezon City.**

Submission of bids will be on October 23, 2007 between 8:00 a.m. to 9:55 a.m. at the **SRA Social Hall, Philippine Sugar Center Building, North Ave., Diliman, Quezon City. Opening of bids** will start exactly at **10:00 a.m.**

The NFA shall only accept and award the offer/s and volume of yellow corn after confirmation from corn users/buyers.

The National Food Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bid proposals, to waive any required formality or defect therein and may accept the bid/s which is deemed most advantageous to the Agency.

(Sgd.) **LUDOVICO J. JARINA**
Deputy Administrator and
Chairman, BAC

(PDI - October 3, 2007)

LETTERS

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Heartwarming, cool, appealing

I FIND THE INQUIRER'S FRONT-page design very interesting and innovative. I have never seen such a very heartwarming and cool concept in a newspaper (maybe because I only read the INQUIRER).

I found the photo in the Aug. 18, 2007 issue of children playing in the rain very appealing. My heart melted seeing that photo. My congratulations to the photographer.

To me the INQUIRER is the No. 1 newspaper in the country. Congratulations to the INQUIRER.

—JERRY ROCACURVA,
jerrymcfo@yahoo.com

Why are many Filipinos going hungry?

IF EVERYTHING ABOUT THE Philippine economy is as rosy as President Macapagal-Arroyo paints it (and as gushed over by American businessmen), why do the surveys consistently reveal that one out of every three Filipinos wants to leave the Philippines?

And why does a recent study reveal that 30 percent of Filipino families "go hungry"?

—PERLA MANAPOL,
4331 Blackwod St., Newbury Park,
California 91320, USA

IF you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to Nos. 897-4793, 897-4794, or e-mail readersadvocate@ inquirer.com.ph

Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
Regional Office No. IV-A
3rd Flr., Anderson Bldg., II, Brgy. Parian, Calamba City
Telefax Nos. (049) 545-0292
October 03, 2007

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s.

	Name and Address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National/Citizenship	Position
1.	CLUB PUNTA FUEGO, INC. Brgy. Balaytigue, Nasugbu, Batangas	Mr. Alfonso Fernandez-Corrales Spanish	General Manager
2.	GYEONG WOO GARMENTS CO., INC. PEZA, Rosario, Cavite	Mr. Jongun Kang/ Korean	Material Control Manager
3.	HITACHI CABLE PHILIPPINES, INC. Lima Technology Center, Lipa City	Mr. Tsuyoshi Mitsuboshi/ Japanese	General Manager
4.	SANSEN PHILIPPINES, INC. LISP II Brgy. La Mesa, Calamba City	Mr. Takashi Kotsuma/ Japanese	Executive Vice President/ General Manager
5.	ACADEMY PLASTIC MODEL TOY CO., INC. CEPZ, Rosario, Cavite	Mr. Hee Sung Lee/ Korean	Administrative Manager
6.	HANKUK EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION, INC. Brgy. San Luis, Antipolo City	Ms. Mi Kyong Kang/ Korean	Teacher
7.	HANKUK EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION, INC. Brgy. San Luis, Antipolo City	Mr. Palok Kim/ Korean	Dorm Parent
8.	MSM MANILA, INC. LISP II, Brgy. Real, Calamba City	Mr. Tsuyoshi Irifune/ Japanese	Die & Mold Fabrication Adviser

If you have any information/objection to the above-mentioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director

(Sgd.) ATTY. RICARDO S. MARTINEZ, SR., CESO III
Regional Director

(PDI–October 3, 2007)

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'Igorota' shouldn't be used for potatoes

THIS REFERS TO THE ARTICLE on the Philippines' new potato varieties, the "fruits of intensive research" conducted by root crop experts at Benguet State University (BSU). (INQUIRER, 9/22/07)

Even though I am a true Manileña, I feel strongly against the experts' use of "Igorota" as the official name for one of their potato varieties. This demeans and denigrates the dignity of an Igorota.

I sincerely hope that the BSU experts will reconsider renaming that variety with another word, maybe, one that is suggestive of something festive.

—OLIVE BEGRE,
prettyo010@yahoo.com.ph

Abueva's interest in MSU intriguing

WE, CONCERNED ALUMNI AND stakeholders of Mindanao State University, found the letter of Dr. Jose Abueva (INQUIRER, 9/25/07) to be more like a press release.

Abueva's claims were in stark contrast to the realities on the ground. We know because we spent years in MSU and we're from Mindanao and hundreds of us recently visited the campus—unlike Abueva whose sudden interest in the university's internal affairs is intriguing.

And we would like to know from him the various sectors, leaders and organizations—Muslim, Christian and lumad—that, he said, want President Macapagal-Arroyo to replace Dr. Ricardo de Leon as MSU president. As of today, the alumni association and all its chapters; the deans, faculty, students and administrative staff in all MSU campuses; local community leaders, including the Iligan City Council; prominent Maranao educators and elders and thousands of MSU alumni worldwide—whether Muslims, Christians or lumads—support and endorse De Leon.

The issue isn't leadership or religion or personalities or academics. It is not whether Dr. Macapado Muslim or any other Maranao educator is capable or not. (Dr. Muslim would probably make a future good president.) The issue closest to our hearts as MSUans is whether all the positive changes happening in MSU today will continue or not.

For so long, we alumni held back on our donations for campus projects because of doubts. Not this time. De Leon has our confidence.

De Leon not only restored peace and order in the campus, he also instituted good governance and fiscal reforms. In just two years, he has rationalized its financial system, arrested squatting, built additional classrooms and academic facilities, repaired/renovated buildings, reduced the payroll and budget deficit, restored electricity and water amenities, retooled learning centers, constructed parks and other infrastructure for social and cultural activities, regained the confidence of external benefactors and alumni donors and rekindled the sense of pride of the MSU community.

Also, under his leadership, the admission requirements have been standardized; deans and faculty are positioned and invested based on merit; libraries and other instructional resources have been restocked; curricula strengthened; and the environment at MSU is again conducive to quality education. The best measure, of course, of De Leon's academic program is the consistently high average of MSU graduates hurdling government exams nowadays.

To insiders, these sterling accomplishments are undeniable. Abueva's statement that "the academic standards of MSU have continued to deteriorate severely" is utterly baseless and misleading. If there is such "deterioration," it could only be the residual effect of the failure of past leadership.

—BOBBY LIM, president,
MSU Alumni of Manila South (National), HALIL LUCMAN,
executive vice president, MSU Alumni Association,
Rooms 1215-1216,
Megaplaza Bldg.,
ADB Avenue cor. Garnet Road,
Ortigas Center, Pasig City

GMA moving to pacify potential foes

YOUR COLUMNIST AMANDO Doronila hit the nail on the head with his Sept. 23 analysis ("Verdict serves as a warning to GMA, too").

Having read the condensed version of the Erap plunder decision, I could see how easy it would be to substitute the name of Joseph Estrada with that of any ex-president while retaining almost all of the cited jurisprudence and lengthy legal discussions.

However, being smart and wily as she always is, President Macapagal-Arroyo is now probably doing her utmost to avoid that chilling post-presidential scenario by attempting to pacify potential enemies before her term expires, through whatever means necessary. But having said that, some of her detractors may insist on an eye-for-an-eye version of justice—now that's another story.

—JOHN HILARIO,
john.hilario@gmail.com

Neri's intellectual and moral dilemma

BRAVO! THE EDITORIAL "BODYGUARD OF lies" (INQUIRER, 9/26/07) must be one of the best pieces I've ever read in 22 years of INQUIRER browsing! Herein lies the intellectual and moral dilemma of Commission on Higher Education Chair Romulo Neri—to serve as a "bodyguard of lies" or to expose the light of truth.

As the old Latin adage puts it: "Taciunt consentire"—To be silent is to agree. But I have no doubt Neri, the "Blue Eagle," will soar to moral heights and damn plebeian corruption.

Good job, INQUIRER! The editorial put Neri in a moral horn of dilemma.

—RENE TABABA,
11 Santan St. Mapayapa II,
Holy Spirit 1107, Quezon City

R.A. 9048 Form No. 4.1 (LCRO)
(Revised 10 August 2001)

Republic of the Philippines
Local City Registry Office
MANILA

Republic of the Philippines)
City of Manila) S.S.

Petition No. CFN 2007

PETITION FOR CHANGE OF FIRST NAME

I, MARILOU OBIAL ADEA, of legal age, Filipino, and a resident of 44 Istanbul Street, BF Homes Parañaque City, Metro Manila, after having been duly sworn to in accordance with law hereby declare that:

1) I am the Petitioner seeking clerical error in my Certificate of Live Birth,
2) I was born on February 11, 1951 at the Children and Maternity Hospital in Manila;
3) The birth was recorded under registry number 1716 (651)
4) The first name to be changed is from TERESITA to MARILOU,
5) The grounds for filing this petition are the following: I have habitually and continuously used MARILOU and I am publicly known in the community with that first name
6) I submit the following documents to support the petition: Certificate of Live Birth (Register No. 1716 (651) of Teresita O. Adea born February 11, 1951. Certification dated September 06, 2007 from the National Statistics Office (NSO) certifying as to lack of any record of birth of one Marilou O. Adea allegedly born February 11 1951. Marriage Contract of Marilou O. Adea and Jack Wendel Proctor on February 16, 1984 issued by the National Statistics Office. Certificate of Live Birth Register No. 84-9554 of John Ernest Adea Proctor born November 10, 1984. College Diploma of Marilou O. Adea who graduated from University of the Philippines with a degree of Bachelor of Science in Business Administration on May 14, 1971, Transcript of Scholastic Records of Marilou O. Adea from the University of the Philippines issued on November 16, 1982; Certification of Marilou O. Adea issued by the Starmall Group of Companies on September 14, 2007 as the position of Ms. Adea as the Court Appointed Rehabilitation Receiver of Manuela Corporation, National Bureau of Investigation Clearance of Ms. Marilou O. Adea dated September 05, 2007. Philippine National Police Clearance of Ms. Marilou O. Adea dated September 05, 2007. Philippine Passport No. MM 446751 of Ms. Marilou O. Adea issued at Manila on January 27, 2004. Non Professional Driver's License No. N0674000583 of Ms. Marilou O. Adea issued by the Land and Transportation Office, Makati District Office on February 03, 2006, and Individual Community Tax Certificate No. 13360860 of Ms. Marilou Adea issued at Parañaque City on January 18, 2007
7) I have not filed any similar petition and that, to the best of my knowledge, no other similar petition is pending with any LCRO, Court or Philippine Consulate,
8) I am filing this petition at the LCRO of Manila in accordance with R.A. No. 9048 and its implementing rules and regulations.

(Sgd.) MARILOU OBIAL ADEA - Petitioner

(PDI - Sept. 26 & Oct. 3, 2007)

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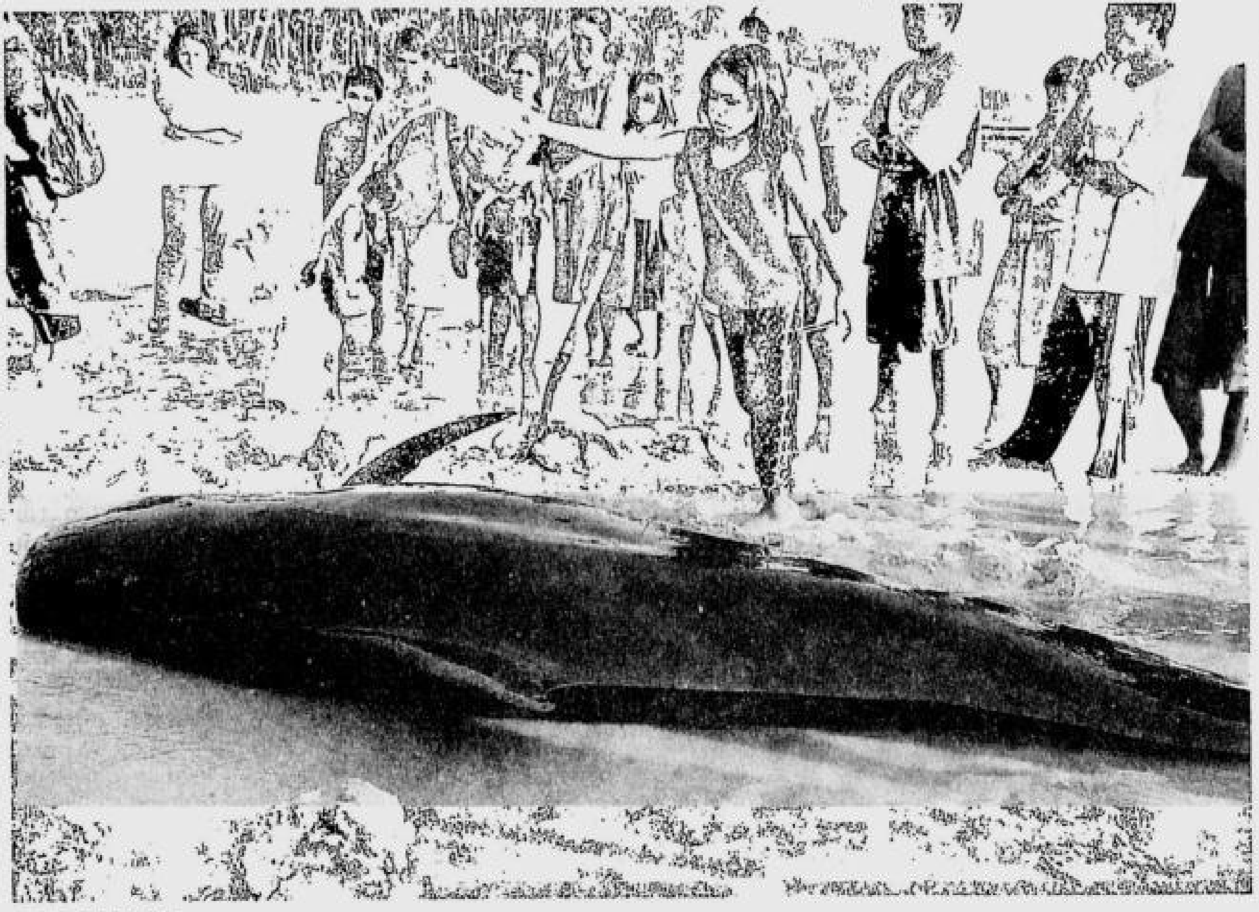

STRANDED

REDEMPTO ANDA/INQUIRER SOUTHERN LUZON

A girl helps to keep alive a 15-foot pilot whale found stranded Tuesday along Puerto Princesa Bay, Palawan. Efforts were launched by local authorities to revive the marine mammal and bring it back to deeper waters. Pilot whales and dolphins are common sights around the area and have become a tourist attraction.

Businessmen oppose transfer of SSS office to Kidapawan

COTABATO CITY—FOUR BUSINESS GROUPS have opposed the plan to transfer a Social Security System branch here to Kidapawan City in North Cotabato.

The planned transfer of the SSS branch to North Cotabato had been approved by the SSS central office following the alleged threat to the lives of its personnel when two of its branch managers were separately shot.

One died on Sept. 5 while the other survived late last year.

Cris Ferolino, president of the Cotabato City Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said thousands of SSS members here and in nearby towns of Maguindanao, Shariff Kabunsuan, Lanao del Sur and Sultan Kudarat will be deprived of the services of the agency.

In a meeting attended by key officers of three other chambers from the Muslim, Filipino-Chinese and Metro Cotabato, Ferolino said, the chambers were one in coming up with a joint resolution asking the SSS Central Office to "reconsider its plan" for the sake of thousands of its clients.

"It will entail extra time, money and effort to transact business if the SSS here is transferred to Kidapawan which is a two-hour ride from Cotabato City," said Ferolino, who manages the Aboitiz-owned Cotabato Light and Power Co.

Earlier, members of the city legislative council or the Sangguniang Panglungsod, headed by Vice Mayor Japal Guiani Jr., also passed a similar resolution addressed to the SSS main branch in Manila.

SSS insiders have confided the existence of an alleged syndicate engaged in "death benefits claim" that has posed a security threat to them.

Reports reaching Mayor Muslimin Sema revealed allegations of an "inside job." *Charlie C. Señase, Inquirer Mindanao*

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41% of Negros CARP farmers stop tilling

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—FORTY-ONE PERCENT OF AGRARIAN REFORM beneficiaries in Negros Occidental no longer till the land given to them, a study made by the provincial government showed.

The study found that of the 61,375 beneficiaries of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP), 41 percent, or 25,336, no longer till their land, Jose Ma. Valencia, chief of staff of Negros Occidental Gov. Joseph Marañon, said yesterday.

Abandoned farms

The study also found that CARP beneficiaries near urban areas were more prone to leave their lands, perhaps because they could find alternative sources of income, Valencia said.

Based on the DAR records, there were 111,752 farm lots distributed but it turned out that the figure does not represent the number of beneficiaries in Negros Occidental, which is far less, Valencia said.

"That is because the Capitol study shows that there are beneficiaries who received more than one farm lot, and, in some cases, there were individuals with 14 to 15 farm lots to their name, he said.

Partnerships

Valencia said their survey covered 92 percent of all the beneficiaries in Negros Occidental, with results on the status of eight percent, or 8,795, still being awaited.

The study, which would be completed this month, also showed that the beneficiaries who went into joint partnerships with their former employers are doing better than those who ventured out on their own, he said.

"This is probably because those who went into joint ventures have access to farm inputs," Valencia said.

The second phase of the survey would focus on the 59 percent still tilling their land to determine whether CARP has benefited them and whether the CARP beneficiaries have paid real property taxes and the land amortization to the Land Bank of the Philippines.

No disclosure

However, Land Bank officials said they have to ask for clearance from their Manila head office before they could release the amount of the payments made by the CARP beneficiaries and the payment made by the bank to the landowners, he said.

Valencia, however, said the Land Bank should disclose the amounts since "these are matters of public interest."

He also noted that the greatest problem of the CARP beneficiaries is the lack of support services.

Rise in seawater forces evacuation in 2 provinces

CAMP VICENTE LIM, LAGUNA—OVER 400 families were forced to flee their homes after a sudden rise in seawater level inundated at least seven coastal villages in Rosario, Cavite and San Luis, Batangas late Monday night, officials said Tuesday.

Rosario, Cavite Vice Mayor Jose Rozel Hernandez said residents of Barangays Wawa I and Wawa II sought their assistance after their houses near the seashore went under waist-deep floodwater at around 10 p.m.

"Some of the residents said they were already sleeping when they realized that their houses were swamped by seawater. They said their beds were already drenched when they woke up. The people in the area really panicked," Hernandez said in a mobile phone interview.

Worse than Milenyo

Hernandez said the flashflood was worse than what they experienced when Supertyphoon "Milenyo" hit their town last year.

He added: "We're really baffled by what had happened. The rains and the wind it brought were not that strong yesterday (Monday). The sudden flooding was really unusual."

He said the local government quickly sent rescue teams to move residents to higher ground.

At around 2 a.m. Tuesday, 319 families were brought to two evacuation centers.

Hernandez said before the flooding hap- ing from the sea off Rosario.

Big waves

"The fishermen feared that tsunami was going to occur after they heard that Thailand was supposedly hit by an earthquake," he said.

Hernandez said the people only calmed down when the floodwater receded on Tuesday morning.

He said they advised residents to return home after they received information from higher authorities that the flooding was caused by a brief storm surge.

The vice mayor said less than 20 families are still in the evacuation centers as their houses were destroyed.

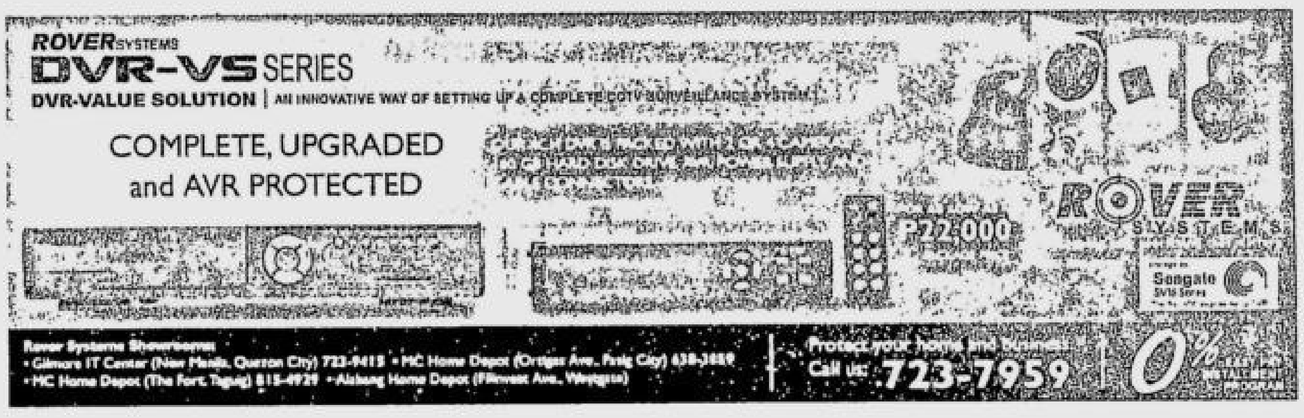
Fishing destruction

Vicente Tomazar, chief of the Office of Civil Defense in Calabarzon, said aside from damaging structures and houses, the flood also destroyed 16 fishing boats in Rosario.

Tomazar, however, gave a different explanation as to what caused the flood.

"The flash flood in Rosario was caused by the rainwater that swelled in higher areas in Cavite after continuous rains during the past few days. The sudden rise of the seawater in the area only aggravated it," Tomazar said.

Five fishing communities in San Luis, Batangas also experienced the unexpected rise of seawater. *Marlon Ramos, Inquirer*



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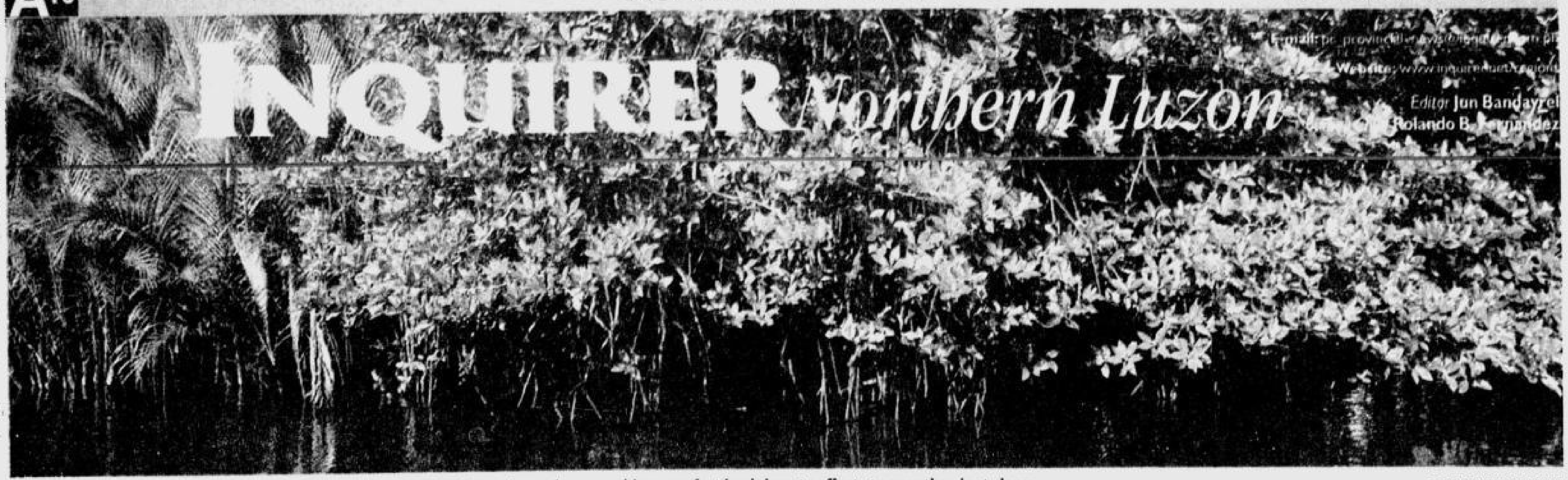


A HEALTHY mangrove forest along the Balingasay River in Bolinao, Pangasinan provides a perfect backdrop to efforts to save the giant clams.

PHOTOS BY RAY ZAMBRANO

Home of giant clams

Giant clams reseeded in waters off Bolinao 20 years ago are already spawning in the wild

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
Bolinao, Pangasinan

THIS IS ONE POPULATION growth that no one will mind: The giant clams (*Tridacna gigas*) reseeded in the waters off Bolinao, Pangasinan, some 20 years ago are already spawning in the wild.

Giant clam meat is considered an aphrodisiac in Asia-Pacific countries. Its shells are used as dishes, tools, jewelry and ornaments. The earliest uses of these shells were in the baptismal and Holy Water fonts in old churches.

Dr. Suzanne Mingoa-Licuanan of the University of the Philippines Marine Science Institute (UPMSI), leader of the giant clam project, says giant clams have been reseeded in more than 50 places in the country. Ten demonstration sites have been put up where giant clams and corals were transplanted with help from local communities.

As a result of these efforts to culture and restock the species, there are some reports of "juvenile recruits" (little clams) of Tridacna gigas, the largest of the giant clam species (1.4 meters), in a few areas. UPMSI scientists are verifying these reports.

"It seems a long wait, with plenty of challenges along the way. Funding was almost always scarce and continues to be so. But it is all worth it," Licuanan says.

She has a reason to be happy. Giant clams were almost gone from Philippine waters in the mid-1980s. Tridacna gigas was considered virtually extinct in Philippine waters in surveys done in 1985.

Bolinao residents are also happy about the success of the UPMSI project that they want to call their town the "home of the giant clams."

"Bolinao had always been a home to giant clams as shown by the fossilized shells found in the town, even on top of the mountains. We are proud and thankful to the UPMSI for bringing the giant clams back in our waters," Margaret Celeste, an environmental activist, says.

The UPMSI has a marine laboratory in the town. There it cultures giant clams for research and seeks to restore the depleted population of these giant bivalves.

Ocean nursery

Licuanan says giant clams are part of the reef ecosystem producing plenty of biomass that may serve as food for fish. Fish also feed on the clams' wastes. In addition, these clams serve as refuge and nursery areas for fish and other organisms.

The UPMSI has an ocean nursery in shallow, clear waters off Silaqui Island, about an hour's boat ride away from Bolinao mainland.

The institute has applied "spawning induction techniques" in the field where clam eggs are collected and fertilized on the boat. Fertilized eggs are returned to the clam hatchery and reared following culture protocols.

Licuanan says they have to protect "defenseless" baby clams in the sea where they are vulnerable to predators and humans.

"We have to monitor them. We need to get the numbers," she says.

While giant clams spawn eggs by the multitude, larval mortality is also high, especially in the wild.

UPMSI scientists want to increase the survival rate. That is why larvae are reared in hatchery and culture tanks until they are big enough to be on their own.

The UPMSI started a giant clam ocean nursery in Barangay Lucero with help from the local government.

"They can use the area for ecotourism," Licuanan says. The area has about 120 giant clams.

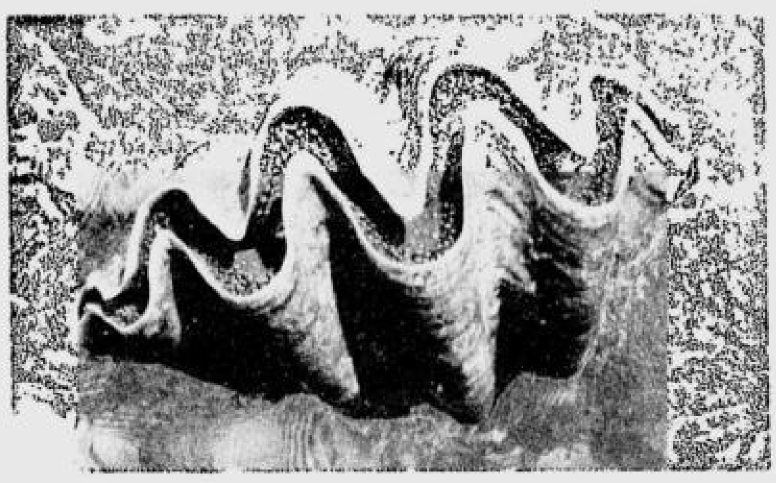
"The local government of Bolinao manages this nursery which serves as a showcase to others as part of its efforts to conserve and manage this marine resource. With this, the large clams in the waters of Silaqui will be given some rest from curious visitors, allowing the clams to spawn freely in the wild without prying eyes," she says.

Licuanan says many agencies and groups are interested in rearing giant clams and monitoring their populations, too.

"We are happy that they wanted to help in the conservation program," she says.

When the Hundred Islands National Park was managed by the Philippine Tourism Authority, 10,000 clams were reseeded around some islands.

After the park was turned over to Alaminos City, thousands of clams remain for the city government to manage and protect. Another major clam reseeding effort was done between 2002 and 2004 with funds from a Pew Foundation grant.



THE GIANT clam's population in the waters of Bolinao, Pangasinan is increasing, thanks to efforts of the UP Marine Science Institute.

Early days

Licuanan says the Philippines was one of the pioneers in Southeast Asia in giant clam culture.

The project began when the Australian government searched for partners among Asia-Pacific countries to study and propagate the Tridacna gigas. Then UPMSI director Edgardo Gomez led the giant clam culture and restocking program.

The Philippines was the only collaborating country that persisted in pursuing the project after the funds from Australia and later Canada ran out.

Licuanan says in the mid-'80s, the UPMSI and the Silliman University Marine Laboratory (SUML) in Dumaguete City surveyed the status of giant clam stocks in the country.

Their studies showed traces of extinction of Tridacna gigas, *T. derasa* (the second largest giant clam species, also called smooth or southern giant clam), *Hippopus hippopus* (strawberry clam) and *Hippopus porcellanus* (China clam).

At about the same time, the giant clam hatchery was started in Bolinao, where UPMSI put up a marine station. Licuanan left the country to pursue her doctorate in Australia where she studied giant clams. She returned in 1990 and got involved with the project.

The UPMSI and SUML did independent and parallel research, exchanging cultured clam stocks for research and restocking activities.

The other giant clam species in the Philippines are the *Tridacna squamosa*, *Tridacna maxima* and *Tridacna crocea*, which still have large populations in some parts in the country.

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

* Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National/Citizenship	Position
CHINA ROAD & BRIDGE CORPORATION Suite 1001 10/F Ma. Natividad Bldg., 470 T. M. Kalaw Ave., Ermita, Manila	Wei Yang Chinese	Engineer
CHINA ROAD & BRIDGE CORPORATION Suite 1001 10/F Ma. Natividad Bldg., 470 T. M. Kalaw Ave., Ermita, Manila	Rulfa Wang Chinese	Pavement Engineer
CHINA ROAD & BRIDGE CORPORATION Suite 1001 10/F Ma. Natividad Bldg., 470 T. M. Kalaw Ave., Ermita, Manila	Tingting Min Chinese	Interpreter
OXFAM 95-A Malumanay St., Teacher's Village, Diliman, Quezon City	Johanna Podlesak German	Humanitarian Programme Coordinator
EKOGAS LPG CONVERSION SERVICES INCORPORATED 412 Mayon St., Lourdes, Quezon City	Tahir Ergur Turkish	Vice-President and General Manager
THE PHILIPPINE CHRISTIAN FOUNDATION, INC. Rm. 505 Amberland Plaza, Julia Vargas St., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Brendan Philip Rees Australian	Consultant Information Technology
STEALTH TRANS INC. 24 Phase II, Sta. Maria Compound, Santolan, Pasig City	Scott Anthony Collins American	General Manager
INT'L. GOLDEN RESOURCES INVESTMENTS & DEVELOPMENT CORP. 1206-B West Tower, Phil Stock Exchange, Exchange Rd., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Lizhe Du Chinese	Marketing Manager
FRANCIS GARCIA ELITE MODELLING AGENCY CO. Unit 3206 Cityland Tower 1, Vito Cruz, Malate, Manila	Shuichi Koga Japanese	General Manager
PABLA LENDING AND TRADING CORP. 8980 Aranga St., San Antonio Village, Makati City	Ajit Pal Singh Indian	Sales Manager
MOCA, INC. (ALOHA HOTEL) 2150 Roxas Blvd., Malate, Manila	Zhongwei You Chinese	Chinese Cook
STAR FACTOR INC. Unit 804, Prestige Tower Condo., Emerald Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	William Devaughan Stumpf German	Talent
INTERNATIONAL REFINERY SERVICES PHILIPPINES, INC. Suite 205, 2F LRI Business Ctr., 210 Nicanor Garcia St., Bel Air, Makati City	Aerlin Binte Ahmad Singaporean	Finance Director
PHILIPPINE GOLF LINE KOREA, INC. Unit 401 Pacific Coast Plaza Condo., Villamor Subd., Paranaque City	Joong Young Kim Korean	Operation Manager
BELLHAUS ENTERTAINMENT INC. 1204 Jafer Place Bldg., 19 Eisenhower St., Greenhills, San Juan City	Amber Marie Rowley American	Talent

If you have any information/objection to the above mentioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

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OIC-Regional Director

(PDI-October 3, 2007)

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GMA inaugurates Razon container terminal in Shandong

By Michael Lim Ubac

SHANGHAI (VIA PLDT)—There will be no other trade agreements signed during the two-day visit of President Macapagal-Arroyo to China.

But Ms Arroyo will inaugurate a container terminal in Shandong province.

The port is now being operated by a corporation owned by businessman Enrique Razon.

Former Socioeconomic Secretary Romulo Neri said in his recent testimony in the Senate that the powerful businessman was the one who had threatened him against allowing a rival to get into Manila's port business.

Neri had apparently earned the ire of Razon, chair and president of ICTSI which operates at the Manila International Container Terminal, because of Neri's fierce advocacy of the liberalization of Manila's lucrative but monopolistic port services.

Ms Arroyo, who arrived here yesterday morning, will fly to Shandong today to personally witness what she described as the "inauguration of the Filipino joint venture at the container terminal."

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said the joint venture between Filipinos and Chinese businessmen was the "first project of ICTSI (International Container Terminal Services, Inc.) in China."

Takeover

"None that I know of," said Bunye, when asked by the INQUIRER about other possible deals with Chinese investors to be signed during the visit.

ICTSI has a 60-percent stake (RMB 389.1 million) in Yantai Rising Dragon International Container Terminals Ltd. (YRDICT), which formally took over operations of the Yantai Gangtong Container Terminal in Shandong province on April 3. (US$1 is equivalent to RMB 7.5.)

The takeover of the terminal came after ICTSI received regulatory approvals from the Chinese government, according to documents provided by ICTSI.

ICTSI said it entered into a "framework agreement" with Yantai Port Group Company, Ltd. and SDIC Communications Co. to purchase a 60-percent joint-venture stake in Yantai Gangtong Container Terminal Co. Ltd., which was renamed YRDICT.

YRDICT will operate berths 38 and 39 of the container terminal in the port of Yantai, a prefecture-level city in Shandong.

The port is the largest fishing seaport in the northeastern province.

"ICTSI has already made the first payment if RMB 116.7 million in accordance with the agreement. ICTSI is funding this acquisition with internally generated funds and with proceeds from the private placement and sale of some 300 million ICTSI shares by another subsidiary, ICTSI Warehousing, Inc.," ICTSI said.

The registered capital of YGCT is RMB 600 million, it added.

In her departure statement, Ms Arroyo said her visit to China underscored that her administration was "aggressive in seeking multilateral and bilateral trade relationships."

Razon now most powerful businessman, says JDV son

From page A1

Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo," De Venecia told the INQUIRER.

De Venecia has accused the President's husband of thrusting a finger at his face and telling him to "back off" from pursuing the National Broadband Network (NBN) deal. Arroyo has denied De Venecia's allegation.

The government eventually awarded the $329-million contract for the NBN project to China's ZTE Corp.

"We know he (Razon) is rich but I don't know how much he has contributed to her campaign," said De Venecia, founder-owner of Amsterdam Holdings Inc., which submitted an unsolicited offer to undertake the NBN project.

No. 1 in Forbes Asia

Razon is ranked No. 11 on Forbes Asia's list of 40 richest Filipinos, with a personal fortune of $285 million.

He reportedly served as treasurer of the administration's Team Unity coalition in the May senatorial elections.

De Venecia claimed that even his father, Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr., did not escape Razon's tongue-lashing.

"I saw him (Razon) shouting at my father in our house. Imagine that," the younger De Venecia said. But he said he could not remember what his father and Razon were arguing about.

At the Senate hearing last week on the ZTE deal, Neri told the senators that Razon confronted him at a party in the Forbes Park residence of the Speaker's mother-in-law.

"During that party he accosted me, in effect telling me that you will allow Harbour Centre to operate over my dead body," Neri quoted Razon as telling him.

Neri had proposed to break the oligopoly at Manila's ports by allowing Harbour Centre to handle the lucrative twenty-foot-equivalent unit (TEU) shipping container business currently limited to Razon's ICTSI at the Manila International Container Terminal and Asian Terminal Inc. at the South Harbor.

Harbour Centre runs the port terminal at the former Smokey Mountain.

House help witnesses

De Venecia III claimed that several of their househelp witnessed the incident in which Razon hurled invectives at Neri.

Shortly after the incident, the younger De Venecia noted that Neri was transferred by the President to the Commission on Higher Education (CHEd) even though his core competence was economics and not education.

Neri was named chair of CHEd in the last week of July.

De Venecia said Ms Arroyo's tolerance of Razon's ill-treatment of Neri did not come as a surprise considering that she apparently did nothing after Neri told her of the P200-million bribe offered to him by then Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr.

ICTSI has port terminals in Manila, Subic, Batangas and General Santos City. It also operates ports in Japan, Indonesia, Poland, Brazil, Syria and Madagascar.

In March this year, ICTSI disclosed that it had won another port contract abroad, this time in Ecuador.

No TRO on 'Hello Garci' probe; high court grills petitioners

From page A1

heroes of the day if, instead of asking the court to prohibit the Senate investigation, they insist that the Senate play the tapes because the contents involve the integrity of the electoral process," Gutierrez told lawyers Mario Ongkiko and Manuel Lazaro.

The justices also questioned the standing of Ranada and Agcaoili to file the petition, saying the two would suffer no direct injury if the "Hello Garci" tapes were played and the hearings continued.

Gutierrez said the petitioners filed the suit as taxpayers, citizens and members of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines, but presented no claim that there was an illegal disbursement of funds for the inquiry, or how much was spent for it.

Agcaoili said they were invoking judicial supremacy, including the power of the court to allocate constitutional boundaries.

Gutierrez also said the petitioners did not talk to any of the parties whose conversations were recorded, and wondered why the retired justices were taking up the cudgels for them.

Petitioners not parties in tapes

The petitioners are not even parties in the recorded conversations, Justice Antonio Carpio pointed out.

But according to Ongkiko, the issue will affect the general public, whose right to privacy may be set aside when the Senate invokes its power to conduct inquiries in aid of legislation.

"In a personal sense, the petitioners would not suffer. But in the general sense, everybody would be affected who may be tapped in their private conversations," he said.

Gutierrez also asked Ongkiko whether cleaning up the electoral process was more important than the right to privacy that would supposedly be violated if the tapes of the purported phone conversations between President Macapagal-Arroyo and then Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano during the 2004 presidential election were played during the Senate hearings.

"Should not compelling state interest ... override the right of a person to privacy? What's more important, the cleansing of the election process to avoid fraud or the right to privacy?" she said.

Ongkiko said the issue was whether the Senate could violate a law to achieve a certain purpose.

"It all boils down to whether the end would justify the means," he said.

Violation of privacy

Ranada and Agcaoili had asked the high court to stop the Senate inquiry into the "Hello Garci" tapes on the grounds that the use of the recordings would violate a person's right to privacy.

They had also said the rules of procedure necessary for the conduct of inquiries in aid of legislation had not yet been published.

Ongkiko told the high court that another issue was whether a person's right to privacy could be invaded by Congress' power to conduct investigations.

He said a person's right to privacy could not be sacrificed, and that the use of the tapped conversations would violate both the Constitution and the Anti-Wiretapping Law.

Lazaro said that in filing the petition, the retired justices did not want the lawmakers "to become lawbreakers."

Concern for the law

Justice Ruben Reyes also asked whether playing the "Hello Garci" tapes at the Senate hearings would better serve the public interest.

Agcaoili said he and Ranada were not so much concerned about personalities as about the law. He said the mere playing of the tapes of recorded conversations was already a crime.

Justice Adolf Azcuna also asked whether the Senate could invoke public interest to play the tapes, and whether the senators could just turn state witnesses if they were charged with violating the Anti-Wiretapping Law.

Ongkiko said he thought that was possible.

Justice Consuelo Ynares Santiago said the playing of the recordings in the media could mean that the contents had become public knowledge.

Ongkiko said it had to be established that it was the original tape that was played. He added: "I'm not prepared to admit that the enforcement of constitutional rights will be moot and academic just because the media overplayed its hand. And anybody who played the tape is liable for prosecution."

But Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. pointed out that the petitioners did not raise the constitutionality of the issue "at the earliest possible time," or in June 2005, when Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye first played the tapes before the media.

Rules on Senate probes

On the question of whether the rules governing Senate inquiries in aid of legislation needed to be published, Chief Justice Reynato Puno said it was the Senate's inherent power to conduct investigations, even without the publication of the rules.

Puno said the constitutional provision requiring the Senate to publish the rules did not limit its inherent power to conduct inquiries.

"It merely says if there are rules, it must be complied with. It does not say if there are no rules, there is no investigation," he said.

But Lazaro said the Senate inquiry was "tainted with some doubts as to its validity" because of the nonpublication of the rules.

He said publication of the rules was necessary so that those invited to the hearings could ensure that their rights would not be violated.

He added that without the rules, the conduct of the hearings was premature.

But Puno said the rules were intended to ensure orderliness, and that the rights of persons invited to hearings could be protected by the Constitution and the law.

On the other hand, Pimentel told the court that contrary to Ranada and Agcaoili's claim, the Senate had actually caused the publication of the rules in major newspapers in 1992, 1995 and 2006.

He said no changes in the rules had been made since then.

Wireless communication

Carpio said the Anti-Wiretapping Law, which had not been amended since the 1960s, did not cover wireless communication involving cellular phones.

In wireless communication, the voice is transmitted through the airwaves, which are considered public, he said.

But Ongkiko said the phone conversations in the "Hello Garci" tapes could have been captured using a recorder, the use of which is prohibited under the law.

Justice Leonardo Quisumbing said the Senate inquiry might not be in aid of legislation, but might be for political destabilization.

In that case, he said, the proceedings would be political and the court could then not interfere.

Detective work

Justice Renato Corona commented that policemen and prosecutors at the Department of Justice could do a better job of uncovering the truth behind the "Hello Garci" scandal than the senators.

"Isn't that detective work?" Corona asked of Pimentel, who argued that the Senate had aimed to find out the identity of the persons in the tapped conversations.

"Has that not yet been ferreted out by the House? Is that your job as senators?" Corona said. "There are people who can do better jobs at that, like the police and the DOJ prosecutors."

Pimentel said there was no political agenda involved in the Senate inquiry into the issue.

"The hearings could resolve the implications of the Anti-Wiretapping Law on the elections and the conduct of military officers with regard to this law," he said.

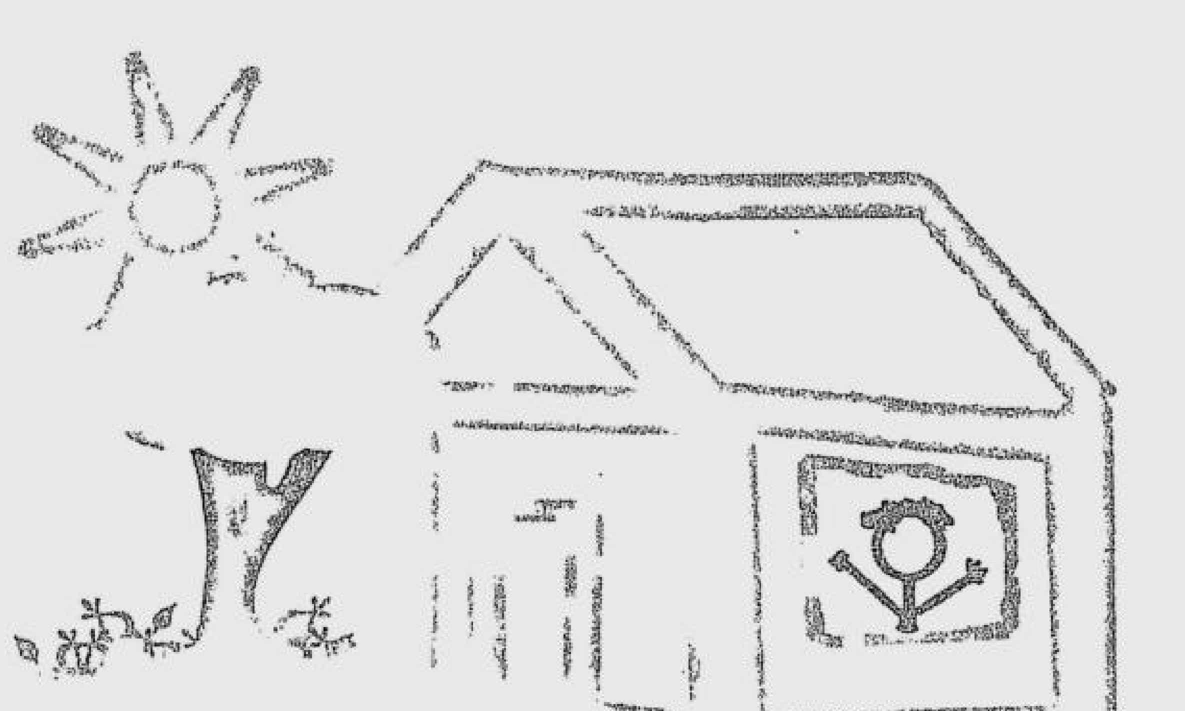
No legal standing

In a 15-minute speech interrupted by a power outage that lasted throughout the session, Pimentel said Ranada and Agcaoili did not have the legal standing to question the Senate hearings.

"Clearly, the petitioners are not the subjects [of the wiretapping]," he said.

He pointed out that only the subjects involved in the phone conversations—"Ma'am" and Garcillano—could cause the prosecution of those who had violated the Anti-Wiretapping Law.

"They have not complained, and it is safe to say that they have waived their right to privacy," Pimentel said. *With a report from Margaux C. Ortiz*



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AND NOW FOR THE GOOD NEWS: President Arroyo delivers the good news about the Philippines to Chinese leaders led by President Hu Jintao. Ms Arroyo "sees China, which is the fastest growing economy in the region, as a friend of the Philippines.

MALACAÑANG PHOTO

GMA: NBN deal is dead

From page A1

don't want to use any word other than what was used by the President," but quickly added, "when you cannot continue again, *tapos ka na* (it's finished)."

Bunye, who was with Ms Arroyo during the meeting with Hu at the Xi Jiao Guesthouse here soon after the Philippine contingent arrived from Manila, said that Ms Arroyo "counted on the good relations between our two countries for understanding."

Cyber education

Bunye said nothing about the fate of a much bigger contract—the Cyber Education Project (CEP)—which was signed together with the NBN deal at the Haikou International Airport in Hainan on April 21 in the presence of Ms Arroyo.

The CEP is also supposed to be funded by China.

Soft loan

The NBN project, which sought to link national agencies with local government units through a high-capacity telecommunications network, was to be funded by China through a soft loan, which would have carried an interest rate of 3 percent payable in 20 years.

It was China that named as contractor Zhong Xing Telecommunications Equipment (ZTE) Corp., a state-owned telecommunications company listed on the Shenzhen and Hong Kong stock exchanges.

Asked about Hu's reply, Bunye said: "We're gratified that President Hu offered understanding when he said that our relationship is in very good shape."

On Sept. 22, Ms Arroyo suspended the implementation of the NBN and Cyber Education projects, blaming "political noise" for her decision. Earlier, the Supreme Court issued a temporary restraining order on the implementation of the project.

The deal has been marred by allegations that it was overpriced, tainted with bribe offers and was not necessary.

First casualty

The President's husband was linked to the deal when the owner of a losing project proponent, Jose "Joey" de Venecia III, accused him of shoving a finger at him and telling him to "back off" of the project.

The controversy claimed its first casualty on Monday when Benjamin Abalos Sr. resigned as chair of the Commission on Elections.

De Venecia had accused Abalos of brokering the ZTE deal and of offering him $10 million to withdraw his company's unsolicited proposal.

Abalos was also accused by Romulo Neri, former director general of the National Economic and Development Authority, of offering him P200 million in exchange for his endorsement of the ZTE proposal.

At a Senate hearing last week, Neri invoked executive privilege in refusing to answer questions about Ms Arroyo's role in the deal.

Abalos has vehemently denied De Venecia and Neri's allegations that he offered them bribes.

The Senate has vowed to continue its probe of the ZTE deal.

Great ally

Ms Arroyo, along with top Chinese-Filipino businessmen led by Lucio Tan, George Ty and William Go, Cabinet officials and local government executives, arrived at 9 a.m. here—considered the engine of growth of China—via a chartered Philippine Airlines flight for the first leg of a two-nation swing that will take them to India.

Bunye told reporters that Hu, who was talking with Ms Arroyo through an interpreter, said that "the Philippines has been a great ally."

"I believe that President Arroyo was able to present the large picture to the satisfaction of President Hu. The Chinese president offers understanding for the decision taken by President Arroyo," said Bunye.

Hu cited the efforts of the foreign ministers of both countries "to work out a joint program for cooperation" in the aftermath of the ZTE fiasco, according to Ms Arroyo's spokesperson.

China's National Day

Bunye said Hu also endorsed "the efforts of our trade ministers for developing a five-year economic development program to provide clear guidelines for cooperation."

It was Ms Arroyo who personally raised the ZTE issue at the meeting after the usual formalities.

Ms Arroyo described China as the fastest-growing country in the region and the world.

Ms Arroyo also greeted China on its 58th anniversary of the ascension of the Communist Party of China to power following a bloody revolution.

China is holding a National Day, a weeklong holiday to commemorate the historic event.

One-China policy

"The Philippines sees China's rise as a significant opportunity for the Philippines. At this point, the President reiterated the strict adherence of the Philippines to the one-China policy, which was very much appreciated by President Hu. The President described that our relationship has been one that is characterized by respect, consultation and mutual benefit," Bunye said.

"At this juncture, that's when she injected the issue of the NBN project. What stood out there was the term 'difficult'—'it was a difficult decision not to continue with the NBN project.' She volunteered that after they went through the different topics," he said.

Other issues discussed at the meeting were Hu's appreciation for Ms Arroyo's presence at the Special Olympics World Summer Games (both leaders opened the 10-day games last night in a colorful ceremony at the Shanghai Stadium; story on this page), prospects for Chinese investors, especially in mining and other "sunrise industries," Bunye said.

He said the Chinese president understood Ms Arroyo's decision because of Trade Secretary Peter Favila's "back channeling," which "preceded even his (Favila's) announcement last week about the decision not to continue with the contract."

"This is just one item out of a wider spectrum of relationship. The Chinese president described the efforts now being undertaken jointly by the foreign ministers and by the trade ministers," Ms Arroyo's spokesperson said.

Palace wants Senate to stop NBN deal investigation

By Norman Bordadora
and Jocelyn R. Uy

NOW THAT THE IMPEACHMENT case against Benjamin Abalos Sr. is dead, Malacañang wants the Senate to stop its investigation of the controversial $329-million contract for the National Broadband Network (NBN) project.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita yesterday told reporters he saw no more need for the Senate investigation following President Macapagal-Arroyo's suspension of the deal and Abalos' quitting as Commission on Elections chair.

Abalos is accused of brokering the deal and of offering bribes to a businessman and a Cabinet official so that China's ZTE Corp. could bag the NBN contract.

His resignation on Monday brought the impeachment case filed against him last week to an abrupt end.

The resignation of Abalos, however, has cleared an obstacle that would have prevented the Office of the Ombudsman from investigating his role in the ZTE deal.

Assistant Ombudsman Mark Jalandoni said Abalos could fall under the jurisdiction of the antigraft body, which recently created a special panel in response to a lawyer's request to investigate Abalos.

Being the Comelec chair then, Abalos was an impeachable official, whom the antigraft body could not go after.

Presidential Legal Adviser Sergio Apostol said the Senate inquiry may only serve to support the tendency of senators to play to the gallery on national television.

The senators want to continue the ZTE-NBN probe primarily to press former Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri to shed light on Ms Arroyo's role in the award of the contract to ZTE.

Neri told the Senate last week that Abalos offered him P200 million in exchange for his support for ZTE undertaking the project aimed at linking government agencies with local government units through a high-capacity telecommunications network.

Abalos vehemently denied Neri's allegation.

Neri, director general of the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) when the NBN project was approved, said that he told Ms Arroyo about the bribe offer and that she advised him to reject it.

Invoking executive privilege, Neri refused to answer senators' questions on details of his phone conversation with the President.

Had Abalos kept his post, the impeachment trial would not have allowed government officials to invoke executive privilege and withhold information like Neri did at the Senate last week.

"With the order of the President to suspend the ZTE contract, does the investigation still have relevance particularly to the joint committee on trade and national defense?" Ermita told reporters.

Before Ms Arroyo suspended the project, the Supreme Court issued a temporary restraining order on its implementation.

"Perhaps there is still relevance to the blue ribbon committee but the center of the investigation is the role of the [Comelec] chairman. Now that the object of their investigation has left, what's the relevance (of the inquiry)?" Ermita said after he saw Ms Arroyo off at the airport for her trip to China.

The Senate has conducted several hearings on the ZTE deal since Sept. 18.

Ermita said the political opposition was expected to exploit issues that may be used to undermine the Arroyo administration.

"It's not really that abnormal because that's the reason why we have a minority and a majority," Ermita said.

The senators want Neri to face the Senate anew in an attempt to make him spill the beans on Ms Arroyo's role in the approval of the ZTE contract.

Apostol said senators were only focusing on the ZTE investigation for the publicity.

"They are only for media hype. You remove the media, (go check) if there (would still be) an investigation," the President's legal adviser told reporters.

Asked if some senators were publicity hungry, Apostol said: "All of them."

The Senate has had enough chance to ask Neri questions that he may answer without violating the President's executive privilege, according to Apostol.

"Senators are never satisfied," he said of the senators' plan to ask Neri to again face the ZTE-NBN inquiry.

"(Neri) has had enough. They asked him questions for 12 hours," Apostol said.

Nothing more to say

The former Neda director general on Sunday said he had nothing more to say to the Senate.

Ermita said Abalos' resignation should start easing the political tension caused by the ZTE-NBN scandal.

"If the chairman did not resign, perhaps we'd still be talking (about the issue) every day," Ermita said.

"If it will lessen the destabilized political situation, definitely that is a positive political development and that's what we want to happen," he said.

Apostol said: "The Palace expects the controversy to die down."

Asked about the possibility of the former Comelec chair turning into a whistle-blower against Ms Arroyo, Apostol said Abalos "is an honorable man."

Three complaints

Last week, lawyer Ernesto Francisco Jr. asked the Office of the Ombudsman to probe Abalos and the President's husband, Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo, on their connection to the ZTE deal.

The request was the first of three NBN-related complaints filed with the antigraft body.

The first was filed by the National Bureau of Investigation against Emmanuel Ang, the commercial attaché who supposedly lost copies of the ZTE contract hours after these were signed on April 21 in Boao, China.

PNP chief: My calling card not meal coupon, movie pass, etc.

From page A1

coupon, or even a movie pass.

The newly installed chief of the Philippine National Police yesterday issued this stern reminder to hundreds of individuals to whom he had handed out his business card throughout his 33 years in the service.

"It is not a license to commit any infraction of the law, or even (enjoy) free entrance to movie houses or wherever," PNP Director General Avelino Razon told reporters.

Razon, who formally succeeded retiring Director General Oscar Calderon on Monday, was asked at a press conference in Camp Crame how he intended to deal with influence peddlers or name-droppers, especially motorists who would show off such police VIP cards when stopped for traffic violations.

"The reason we are giving the cards is for the recipients to know where to send their correspondence, where they can call, e-mail or text us. The purpose is to bring the PNP commanders and personnel closer to our people," he said.

Razon surmised that he had given out hundreds of calling cards since his days in the defunct Philippine Constabulary.

Before his appointment to the PNP's highest post, he served as its deputy chief for administration, commander for the National Capital Region, and chief of the Western Police District covering the city of Manila.

Not employment agency

On his second day as PNP chief, Razon reported receiving a steady stream of visitors, including people looking for jobs.

"We are open to everyone, and if anyone asks for our help we put the request through the process," he said. Yet later, he sighed: "Well, the PNP is not an employment agency."

At the press conference, Razon also disclosed his plan to reword the ranks of police officers.

According to his "Commander's Manual," basically an outline of his programs as PNP chief, a "Police Officer" will become a "Patrol Officer," while "Senior Police Officer" will be changed to "Supervising Police Officer."

"The change is meant to convey the real duties and responsibilities of our police personnel. When we call them 'patrol officers' we know that their responsibility is to patrol our streets," he explained.

Rename TMG

"Supervising Police Officer," on the other hand, would connote that the officer supervises a group of policemen, he added.

Razon also proposed renaming the Traffic Management Group (TMG) as "Highway Patrol Group."

The TMG is the PNP's lead unit against highway robbery and car theft—and rarely gets involved in traffic management, he pointed out.

"So it should be (called) 'highway patrol' since its job is (to maintain) police visibility in our highways," he explained.

The PNP law may have to be amended to make such changes, Razon said.

Probe of Inquirer, four senators sought over leak on secret meeting

From page A1

tors' questions regarding President Macapagal-Arroyo and her role in the deal.

Quoting four sources, the INQUIRER reported in its Sept. 30 issue that Neri was "on the verge" of disclosing what he knew when Arroyo intervened and said Neri should be allowed to avail himself of a legal counsel of his choice.

Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya was subsequently asked to join the executive session at the members-only Senate lounge, the INQUIRER reported.

"The story is a complete falsehood. I say so with a firm conviction," Arroyo said as he introduced his proposed resolution during yesterday's Senate session.

"Almost all the senators were present in that executive session. The question arises: Were four senators the four sources of the INQUIRER report? Did four senators peddle the falsehoods that became the basis of the INQUIRER article?" he said.

Sacrosanct

Holding a copy of the INQUIRER's Sept. 30 issue, Arroyo said the report had "destroyed the sacrosanctness of the executive session."

He said the Senate should investigate the violation of the gag rule, or "no one will believe the confidentiality and sacrosanctness of executive sessions" anymore.

Senators Miriam Defensor-Santiago, Juan Ponce Enrile, Benigno Aquino III and Francis Escudero readily backed Arroyo's resolution for an inquiry.

Enrile went further, saying the Senate could and should cite INQUIRER reporter Juliet Labog-Javellana for contempt, unless she revealed her sources.

He also challenged Arroyo to support him in amending or repealing the law protecting journalists from being forced to name their sources.

Enrile was referring to Republic Act No. 53, which states that the publisher, editor or reporter of any newspaper, magazine or periodical of general circulation cannot be compelled to reveal the source of any information related to him/her in confidence.

'Borderline case'

Arroyo agreed with Enrile that the Senate could cite Javellana for contempt in order to compel her to reveal her sources. But he stopped short of asking the Senate to actually cite Javellana.

"This is a borderline case. I have not given much thought to it. But there must be some power the Senate has to enable [it] to get to the root of [this matter]," he said.

Enrile belied the INQUIRER report, saying he was seated beside Arroyo during the executive session.

"I thought you were already asleep," Enrile told Arroyo.

Aquino and Escudero said that since the report was false anyway, the complaint should be for slander or libel "by some of our colleagues against Senator Arroyo."

"If it's entirely false, how could the rule on executive sessions have been violated?" Aquino said.

Said Escudero: "Nobody made any intervention in the executive session. It was a free-flowing discussion; there was not even an argument."

Lacson resolution

Sen. Panfilo Lacson said he would file his own resolution calling for an inquiry into the leak.

"I am one with other senators who felt offended when details came out. Nonetheless, I feel that not only those who made the leak violated the [secrecy] rules on executive sessions, but an official of Malacañang as well," he said.

Lacson had questioned Andaya's presence at the executive session, saying it "virtually defeated the purpose of the executive caucus, which was to allow Neri to speak unhindered with nobody pulling his string."

According to Arroyo, Andaya and Deputy Secretary Manuel Gaite attended the executive session because Sen. Alan Cayetano, chair of the blue ribbon committee and of the inquiry into the ZTE deal, had told Neri that he could bring along legal counsel of his choice.

Aside from the senators, Rodolfo Noel Quimbo, director general of the blue ribbon committee, was also present, Arroyo said.

Ethics committee

Sen. Pia Cayetano offered to take Arroyo's complaint to the ethics committee, which she has agreed to chair.

Under Senate rules (Section 128 Rule XLVII), those present in an executive session cannot divulge what transpired unless two-thirds of the members vote to lift the ban.

A senator who violates the confidentiality rule may be expelled upon a two-thirds vote of all the senators.

"The accusation is quite serious. But I am hopeful that my colleagues [and I], on our own, could still arrive at a consensus without having to go through a drawn-out public inquiry and to resort to drastic measures," Cayetano said.

Challenge to PDI

Arroyo challenged the INQUIRER to waive its right to invoke RA 53.

The senator said the INQUIRER had been at the forefront of the campaign to compel Neri to reveal his conversations with the President on the ZTE deal.

"The INQUIRER cannot maintain the moral high ground if it will not allow Ms Javellana to reveal her sources and hide behind the cloak that reporters cannot be compelled to reveal their sources," Arroyo said.

He said the report had compromised the Senate's powers to extract sensitive information from its resource persons during an executive session.

"Some of us violated the rules. Can we not punish them? How can we investigate others if we can't investigate ourselves?" he said, adding:

"Only then can we reassure the public that we can follow our own rules."

SENATOR ARROYO

ROGER MARGALLO

Inquirer statement

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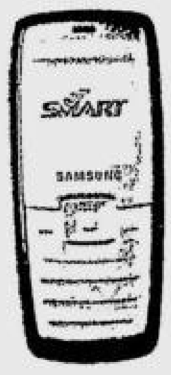
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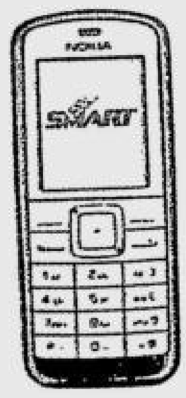
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Ex-NBI agent, woman found dead in condo

By Tina G. Santos and DJ Yap

A FORMER NATIONAL BUREAU of Investigation agent and his employee were found dead inside a condominium unit in Makati City Monday afternoon.

Lawyer Angelito Magno, NBI Special Action Unit chief, identified the victims as Edgardo Veloso, manager of Marzan Trading Co. who used to work for the bureau as a special investigator, and Rachel Uy, one of his employees.

Their bodies, which had already started to decompose, bore several stab wounds. Their faces were also covered with T-shirts.

According to Magno, the victims were found at 2:30 p.m. the other day in Veloso's unit at the AHS Building on Calatagan corner Guernica Streets in Barangay Palanan.

Uy was on lying on the bed while Veloso was on the floor. Both were fully clothed.

Their bodies were discovered by the NBI a day after Veloso's wife asked them for help, saying her husband had been missing since Friday.

"She said she could not contact Edgar and she feared that he had been kidnapped," Magno told reporters.

"At the same time, we also received a report about a female employee of Marzan Trading Co. who had gone missing at about the same time as Edgar.

A relative of Veloso also went to the victim's unit, which was located just one floor above the latter's office.

He immediately called up the NBI after he smelled a foul odor coming from the room.

According to the NBI, there were no signs of forcible entry or robbery.

"Only Veloso's wallet and cell phone were apparently missing. Everything else was in place, including the woman's jewelry," Magno said, adding that the victims could have been killed by a lone suspect.

He said that the NBI is now looking at several angles, including the cases Veloso handled when he was still with the NBI, business rivalry or a personal vendetta.

Veloso left the NBI in 2001 to join a private firm.

Magno said the NBI was also looking into reports that Veloso was among those who had filed a complaint in the bureau against the people behind Francswiss Investment, an Internet-based pyramiding scheme which is believed to have defrauded investors in the country of around P1 billion.

Electrician shot dead in front of house in Quezon City barangay

By Jeannette I. Andrade

A FEW HOURS AFTER A FORMER WATCHman of Barangay Holy Spirit in Quezon City was shot dead in front of his house, another resident of the barangay was killed in the same manner.

Joseph Mirando, 38, an electrician and resident of Commonwealth Avenue, was declared dead on arrival at the General Malvar Hospital after he was shot several times by an unidentified man.

The Quezon City police said that the incident happened at around 8:30 p.m., on Monday, 14 hours after Carlos Francisco, a former barangay watchman, was killed.

Just like Francisco, Mirando was in front of his house when a man approached him and shot him at close range.

The suspect then fled and left the victim bleeding to death.

Mirando's relatives rushed him to the nearest medical facility but he died on the way.

Investigators said they were trying to determine whether or not there was a link between the two deaths.

Earlier in the day, a man on board a motorcycle approached Francisco, who was drinking coffee in front of his house, and shot him twice in the face.

The suspect then boarded his motorcycle and picked up a woman who was standing nearby before speeding away.

Francisco was a former member of the barangay's police security and protection office.

He resigned from his post several months ago because he was preparing to leave for abroad.

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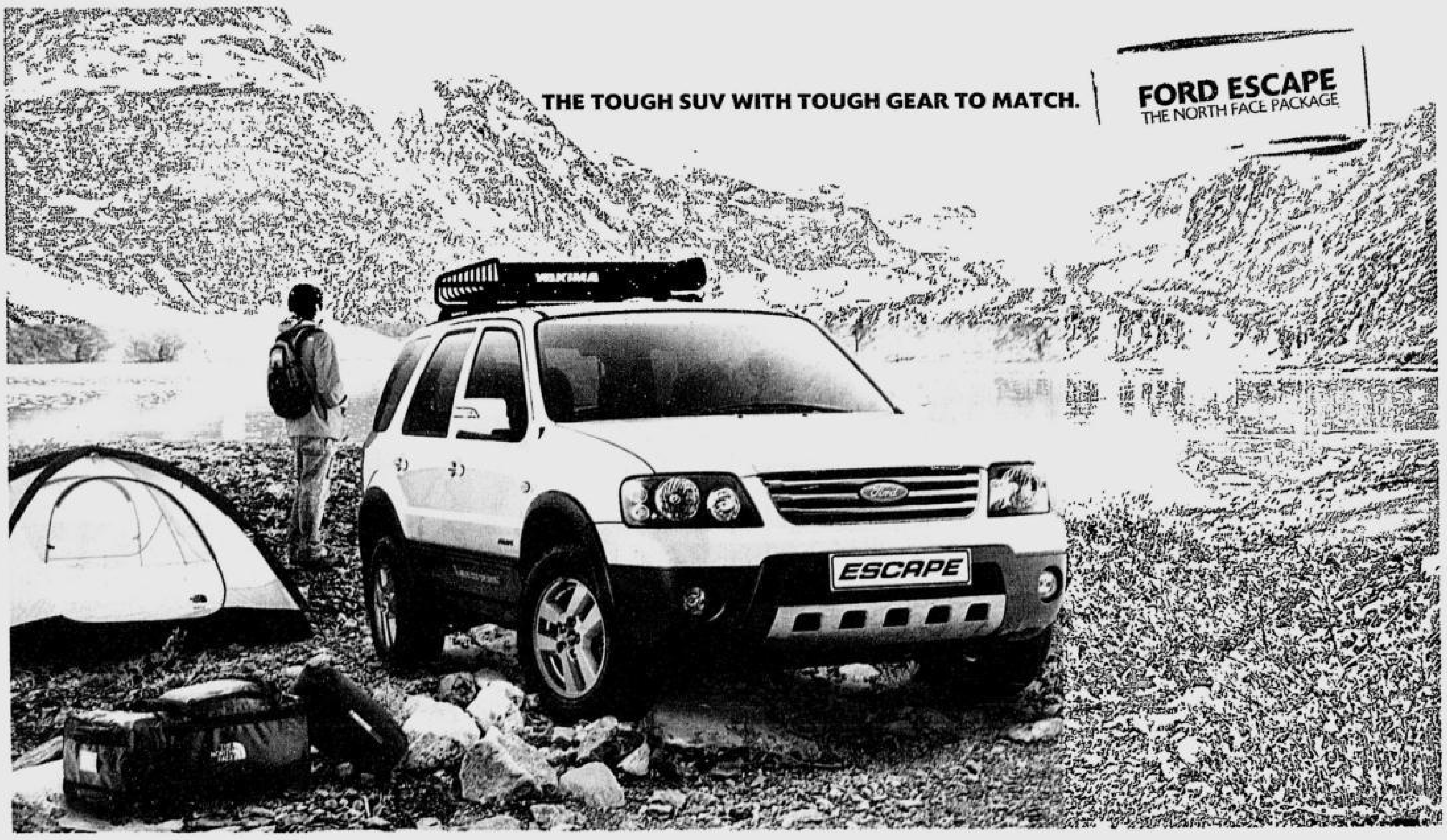

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Munti university exec was not fired, says city official

By Julie M. Aurelio

THE MUNTINLUPA CITY GOVernment yesterday clarified that Dr. Miguel Udtohan voluntarily resigned and was not fired from his post as president of the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Muntinlupa (PLMun).

City administrator Roberto Bunyi said in a statement that Udtohan stepped down after the university's Board of Regents found out that he was moonlighting as president of the College of Maasin in Southern Leyte. Another school official, Dean Danilo Solayao (not Carmen Solayao as earlier reported), was fired after the BOR also found out that he was the school's vice president for academic affairs.

According to Muntinlupa Mayor Aldrin San Pedro, the students were demoralized when they found out that their officials were not performing "100 percent" because of their other positions.

"How can they function efficiently if they are serving two positions in different universities? They were getting other jobs at the expense of the university and the students," San Pedro said in a statement.

He added, "We want the PLMun to become a premier university. Sadly, the university officials were not giving what was expected of them because they were also busy with other jobs.

The mayor pointed out that the passing rate in board exams of the university's graduates had gone down in the past four years.

Bunyi, meanwhile, said that only 25 PLMun employees had been fired since June. A source earlier told the INQUIRER that the BOR had terminated the services of 50 school personnel. Those who were fired were mostly staffers and nonteaching personnel, he added.

He added that some officials who have been fired from their posts were told over the weekend that they could stay on. Bunyi identified them as National Service Training Program chief Jones Espeleta, vice president Brenda Diacajo, guidance department head Dr. Corazon Palomique and registrar Remedios Cunanan.

A check with other city government run schools showed a different setup as far as security of tenure was concerned. Unlike the PLMun whose employees are all casuals, faculty members of the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila, are all regulars except for some part-time personnel.

"They are regulars, not casuals who don't need civil service requirements. Our faculty members have to go through a rigorous selection process," PLM university secretary Marisol Anenias said.

Makati City public information office chief Joey Salgado said the University of Makati likewise has regular, tenured professors on its staff, though some nonteaching personnel are also hired as casual workers. *With Allison W. Lopez and DJ Yap*

NCRPO chief vows more police visibility

By Julie M. Aurelio

IF THE NEW TOP COP IN METRO MANILA had his way, his men would be just a short distance away from those seeking police assistance.

Newly installed National Capital Region Police Office head Director Geary Barias yesterday vowed to fight street crimes by bringing the police force's resources down to the precinct level and the barangays.

In turnover ceremonies yesterday at the NCRPO in Camp Bagong Diwa, Taguig City, Barias said he would adopt a "micro operational approach" in lowering the incidence of street crimes in Metro Manila.

"We will utilize our men in the precincts to be able to give the same kind of service we give to residents of posh villages and slum areas," the newly appointed regional director said.

The changing of the guard was presided over by Philippine National Police chief Director General Avelino Razon Jr., who assumed his post a day earlier.

Barias formerly headed Task Force Usig and also served as director for investigation and detective management and director for comptrollership of the Philippine National Police. Outgoing NCRPO chief Deputy Director General Reynaldo Varilla will be assigned as deputy chief for operations of the PNP.

RAINED OUT
A man, his head bowed, walks on Agham Road in Quezon City to shield his face against a heavy downpour.

JOAN BONDOC

NBI to seek UP stude's help on Mendez slay

By Tina G. Santos
and Kristine L. Alave

THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF INVEStigation will summon for questioning a student of the University of the Philippines who is believed to have been initiated into the Sigma Rho fraternity at the same time as suspected hazing victim Cris Anthony Mendez.

Lawyer Romulo Asis, chief of the NBI Anti-Terrorism Division, identified the student as Andoni Santos.

"We received information that he was with Mendez and they were among the five neophytes recruited by the fraternity," Asis told reporters. "We believe Andoni could provide us with vital information."

A UP official, however, earlier told the INQUIRER that Santos joined the fraternity before Mendez did.

Mendez, who is also a UP student, was declared dead on arrival last month in a Quezon City hospital. There were numerous bruises all over his body. An autopsy report confirmed that Mendez had been beaten up badly before his death.

Meanwhile, the mother of a hazing victim yesterday appealed to Sigma Rho fraternity members to come forward if they were in a position to shed light on the death of Mendez.

In an interview with the INQUIRER in her Marikina City residence, Corazon, mother of Alexander Miguel Icasiano, said she felt sorry that Mendez's mother had to wait for so long to find answers to her son's death.

Icasiano, now a member of the group Citizens Against Violence, said Sigma Rho members owe it to Cristina Mendez to explain how her son died.

"Don't torture Mrs. Mendez. Her son is already dead and they're still doing this to her," a teary-eyed Icasiano said.

According to Icasiano, Sigma Rho officials should be brave enough to appear before investigators and university officials to respond to the charges against them.

Icasiano's son, a public administration major like Mendez, was an applicant of the Alpha Phi Beta fraternity, also based in UP. He died in 1998 while undergoing initiation rites. Five APB members were eventually convicted for his death and served three years in prison.

Makati tops net income list, says COA

By DJ Yap

THE COUNTRY'S FINANCIAL capital yesterday reported posting the highest net income in 2006 among all cities nationwide, citing figures from the Commission on Audit (CoA).

"Makati City's net income of P3,338,625,000 topped that of bigger cities, including Quezon City with P2,934,388,000, and Manila with P1,665,509,000," according to a statement issued by the city quoting a recent report by the CoA.

Mayor Jejomar Binay attributed the city's sound fiscal performance to its efficient tax collection drive, particularly its recently introduced system of "electronic governance and paperless transactions."

"This system allows for greater efficiency, reliability, and transparency, which also minimizes human intervention and error," Binay said in a statement. Under the system, paying taxes in Makati City can take from just two to four minutes.

The bulk of Makati's collection came from real property taxes worth P3.508 billion and P2.953 billion in business taxes.

DID YOU KNOW

LORENZO Ruiz, the first Filipino saint, was born in the 17th century in Binondo, Manila, to a Chinese father and a Filipino mother. He served as an altar boy, professional calligrapher and documents transcriber. He was married and had two sons and a daughter.

Ruiz was forced to leave for abroad after being accused of murder. The ship he was on arrived in Japan during a time of intense Christian persecution. Ruiz and his priest-companions were arrested and taken to Nagasaki, where they were tortured for days. He was killed in September 1637 after refusing to renounce his faith.

Ruiz was beatified in 1981 by Pope John Paul II and was canonized six years later.

Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research

METRO BRIEFS

2 shot dead

A LAWYER was arrested yesterday after he shot two people dead following a traffic altercation. Pasig police chief, Senior Supt. Frank Uyami, identified the suspect as lawyer Manuel Hernandez Jr., a lawyer working at the Pasig City Hall legal department. Uyami said Hernandez was angered when a Nissan Cefiro cut him off as he was driving on Gen. Roxas St. corner Shaw Boulevard in Pasig City. The driver of the Cefiro, identified as Edgardo Canizares, reportedly yelled at Hernandez, who lost his cool and shot him and his passenger, Catherine Palmero, with his .9 mm gun. Canizares and Palmero were killed while the suspect was arrested.

Kristine L. Alave

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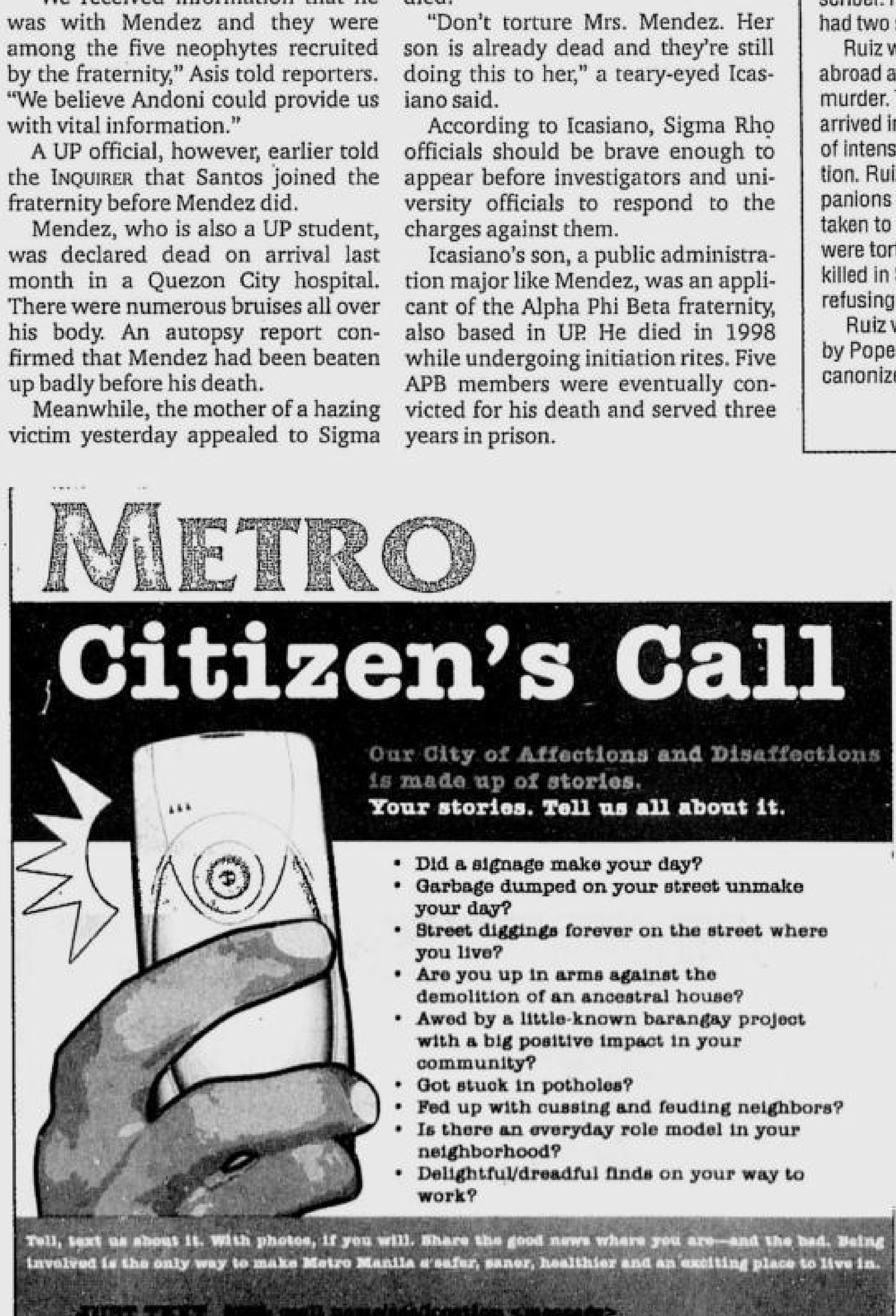
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INQUIRER

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

UN envoy meets Burma's leaders

RANGOON—UN SPECIAL ENVOY IBRAHIM Gambari met with Burma's (Myanmar's) democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi and junta leader Than Shwe on Tuesday, intervening after a bloody crackdown on an anti-government uprising.

The Nigerian-born diplomat shuttled between the regime's remote capital of Naypyidaw, where the ruling generals are sitting out the crisis, and the main city Rangoon, where Aung San Suu Kyi is being held under house arrest.

Gambari has waited for days to see the reclusive Than Shwe and express global outrage after security forces put down protests led by Buddhist monks, leaving at least 13 dead and more than 1,000 arrested.

After the meeting, he jetted to Rangoon, where he spent 15 minutes with Aung San Suu Kyi at the military guesthouse where he also saw her for more than an hour on Sunday, an official said.

The envoy then headed to the airport in Rangoon, where he was expected to board a flight to Singapore, witnesses said.

THAN SHWE AFP

GAMBARI AFP

The top-level talks came as activists struggled to assess the scope of the crackdown and to locate hundreds of dissidents, monks and ordinary civilians who were arrested or have gone missing.

UN and junta officials told AFP that at least 1,000 people have been detained at the Government Technical Institute campus in Rangoon.

Tony Banbury, Asia regional director for the UN World Food Program, said he was concerned at reports that the detainees, including some 500 monks, were now being moved to another location, heightening fears for their wellbeing.

A Burmese official talking on condition of anonymity said that up to 1,700 people had been detained at the campus, including about 200 women and at least one child, a novice monk believed to be 10 years old.

They were being kept inside a windowless warehouse, where the monks have been disrobed and many of them were refusing to eat, he added. *AFP*

Sharp dip in Arctic ice seen

WASHINGTON—ARCTIC SEA ice declined this year to the lowest levels registered since satellite assessments started in the 1970s, extending a trend fueled by human-caused global warming, scientists said on Monday.

Sea ice declined by so much this year that the typically ice-clogged Northwest Passage, allowing vessels to sail from the Atlantic to the Pacific, completely opened for the first time anyone can recall, the researchers said.

Scientists at the US National Snow and Ice Data Center, part of the University of Colorado at Boulder, measure Arctic sea ice during the annual melt season beginning in March and ending in September.

The average sea ice extent for September, when ice is at its lowest quantities, slipped to 4.28 million square-kilometers, breaking by nearly a quarter the previous record low for the month set two years ago, the scientists said.

"Overall there's been a steep and significant downward trend since we've been getting good satellite data starting in 1979," Walt Meier, one of the scientists studying Arctic sea ice for the data center, said in a telephone interview. *Reuters*

Security alert up vs toys with remotes at airports

WASHINGTON—CITING "CREDible specific information" about terror tactics, Transportation Security Administration officers nationwide on Monday stepped up their scrutiny of passengers carrying remote-control toys aboard airplanes.

The move was not motivated by a specific terror plot, said Kip Hawley, the assistant secretary at the Department of Homeland Security in charge of aviation security. But there is concern both in the United States and internationally that common remote-control toys could be used to detonate a bomb as part of a terror plot.

The aviation authorities decided against banning the devices in carry-on bags. But people carrying remote-control toys—including children—could be subject to a more intense search, in which the passenger is patted down and the baggage is checked by hand, officials said. *New York Times News Service*

Britney Spears loses custody of kids

LOS ANGELES—POP STAR Britney Spears on Monday lost custody of her two sons after a wrenching and highly publicized court battle with ex-husband Kevin Federline.

Federline "is to retain physical custody of the minor children on Wednesday Oct. 3, 2007 at 12 p.m. until further order of the court," Judge Scott Gordon wrote in his court order.

Celebrity websites TMZ and X17 said Spears took her sons to the drive-through window of a fast food restaurant before handing them over to Federline's bodyguards shortly after noon on Monday.

The divorce between Spears, 25, and Federline, 29, became final at the end of July, but their temporary shared custody arrangement for their sons has unraveled amid allegations from Federline's camp that Spears was an unfit mother.

Gordon on Sept. 18 ordered Spears to undergo random drug testing in the latest twist in the bitter custody battle over Sean Preston, 2, and Jayden James, 1.

Gordon said at the time that according to evidence presented in closed door hearings, Spears was a "habitual, frequent, and continuous" user of "controlled substances and alcohol," court documents showed. *AFP*

SPEARS AP

WORLDBRIEFS

Israel releases 57 Palestinians

JERUSALEM—Israel freed 57 Palestinian prisoners on Monday, all residents of the West Bank, Israeli officials said, as a gesture to bolster the Palestinian Authority President, Mahmoud Abbas of Fatah. But the planned release of 29 other prisoners from the Gaza Strip, where the militant group Hamas, the rival Palestinian faction, holds sway, was delayed until Tuesday. The Israeli Cabinet had approved the release of about 90 prisoners last week, in part to mark the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. The inclusion of prisoners from Gaza, which Hamas has controlled since violent clashes with Fatah in June, was meant "to encourage the moderates in Gaza as well," a government spokesperson, David Baker, said at the time. *NYT*

Putin wants to be PM

MOSCOW—Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Monday he would run for parliament and had a "realistic" chance of becoming prime minister, in a shock announcement that could herald fundamental change in the way Russia is governed. "I gratefully accept your proposal to head the United Russia list," Putin told a pre-election congress of the party of power, United Russia, bringing hundreds of delegates to their feet with a roar of applause. Putin said that if the party triumphed in the Dec. 2 vote and a worthy successor took his place as president in 2008, he could become prime minister. *AFP*

10 killed, hurt in Kabul blast

KABUL—A suicide attacker blew himself up inside a police bus in the Afghan capital Kabul on Tuesday, killing or wounding at least 10 people, most of them with the police force, officials and witnesses said. The attack—similar to one four days ago that killed 30 defense ministry staff in the city—blew out the sides of the vehicle and ripped off part of the roof. Taliban spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahed said the insurgent militia was responsible for the rush-hour blast in the far west of the city. The number of dead and wounded was not immediately clear. *AFP*

Iraq civilian deaths cut 50 percent

BAGHDAD—Civilian deaths from violence across Iraq fell 50 percent in September, in line with a drop in US military casualties attributed to a boost in troop numbers, Iraqi government data showed on Monday. Information from the health, interior and defense ministries registered 884 civilians killed in September, the lowest monthly total this year, down from 1,773 in August. The casualties were also the lowest since Washington began pouring an extra 30,000 troops into Iraq as part of a security crackdown aimed at al-Qaida and other Sunni Arab militants and Shiite militias across the country. *Reuters*

Pakistan opposition MPs quit

ISLAMABAD—Pakistani opposition MPs staged a mass resignation on Tuesday in protest at military ruler President Pervez Musharraf's bid to win another five-year term in power. Musharraf's two rivals in Saturday's crunch presidential vote meanwhile filed new petitions in the Supreme Court challenging the key US ally's eligibility to stand for reelection. More than 80 opposition MPs backed by hundreds of flag-waving supporters chanting "Go, Musharraf Go!" marched to parliament, where they submitted their resignations to the speaker of the national assembly, or lower house. *AFP*

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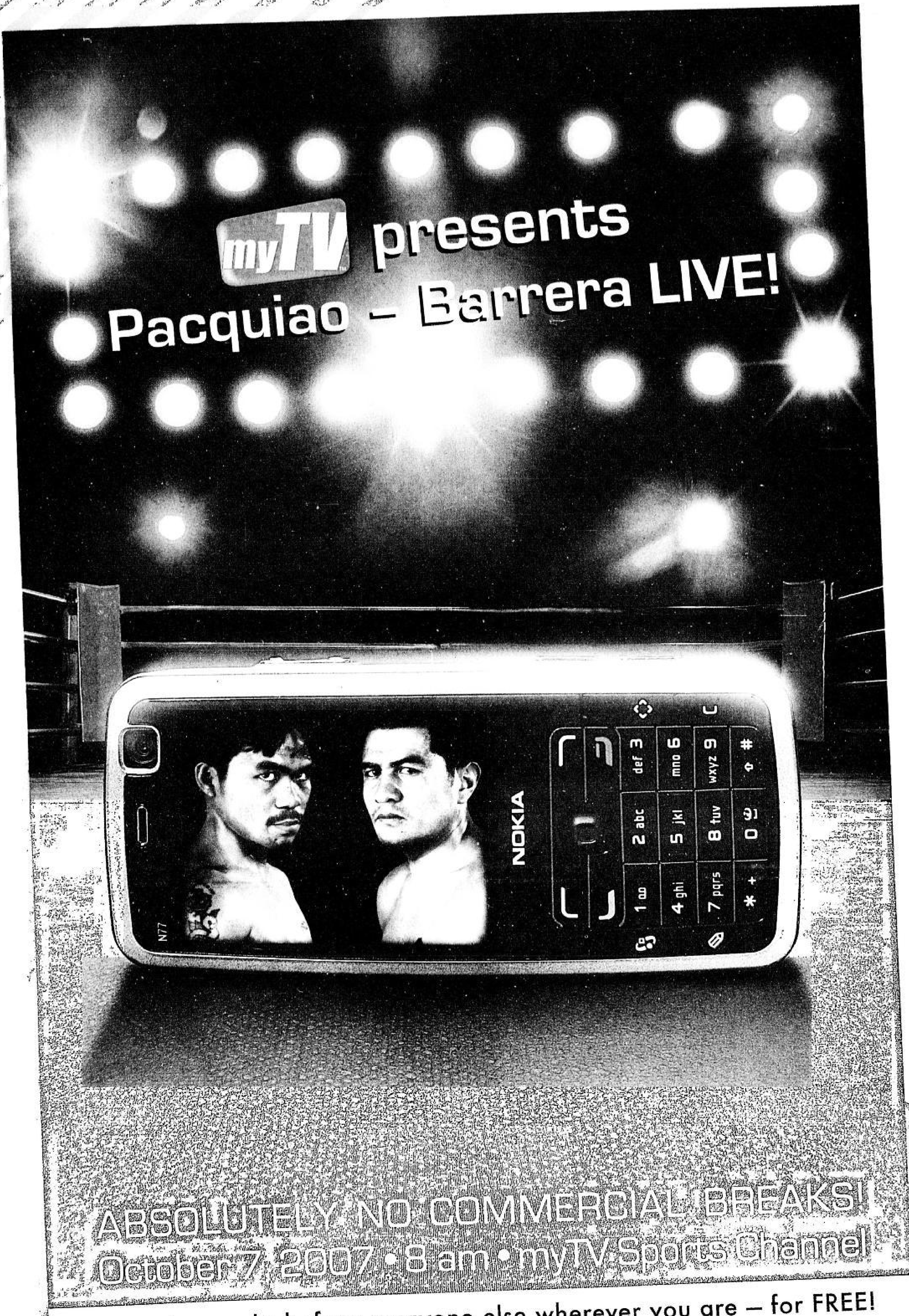
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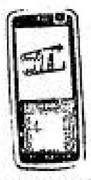
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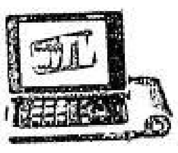
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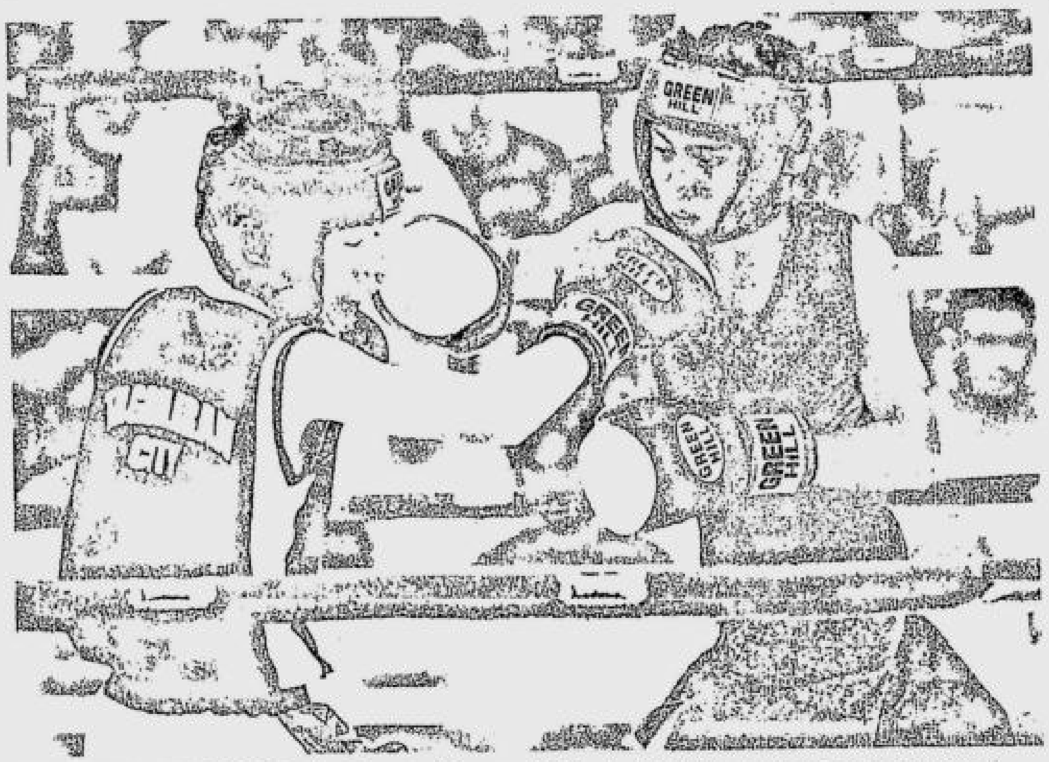

NATIONAL BOXFEST: Carlo Ganot of Davao del Norte (right) beats Jenno Cabugngan of Tagbilaran City to the punch during their light pinweight bout in the Smart National Amateur Boxing Championships at the Provincial Capitol Compound in Cagayan de Oro City yesterday. Cabugngan won. (*Story on page A27*) RAFFY LERMA

Pacquiao hits Las Vegas for final training

By Recah Trinidad

LAS VEGAS—MANNY PACQUIAO, STAR of the show, got a flat, unenthusiastic reception here when he walked into the lobby of the host hotel Monday night but it's his opponent, Marco Antonio Barrera, who's in for a rude welcome.

There were a few colored balloons, held up by a small group of Filipinas who were plainly glad to see their idol, when Pacquiao arrived.

"Forget about him, buddy, Pacquiao will knock him out, that's for sure," blurted Wayne Sausalito, valet parking attendant, as he pumped his right hand.

He didn't have to be asked, but with the hot approval for Pacquiao prevailing in this well-lit gaming capital, Sausalito found the baring of the anti-Barrera sentiment the smartest thing to state.

Pacquiao and his entourage of around 30 people hit the glittering Strip area as scheduled in a five-vehicle convoy, including a 14-seat van, at 9 p.m. Monday, after a five-hour drive from Los Angeles.

Filipino John Pribhdas was surprised to learn that Pacquiao was already in the hotel.

"We're all for him, but we could not find anybody here to bet against," the brother of the late Danny Pribhdas in the PBA explained.

All the Mexicans he knew around here were all for Pacquiao, claimed the tall lobby attendant with a well-modulated voice.

To make up for the cold reception, Mandalay Bay, host of the Will to Win card, has lined up elaborate greetings for Pacquiao Tuesday, before the scheduled media workout for the Filipino boxing superstar.

Although it was not clear if Barrera had checked in, the Mexican boxing legend has been scheduled to shadow-box before members of the press on Wednesday.

There was emphasis on speed in Pacquiao's final workout at Wild Card yesterday that included four rounds of sparring and an unscheduled work with the heavy bags.

"I don't want him to be too tight," trainer Freddie Roach said of his prized warrior who he said has visibly hit peak form ahead.

Pacquiao himself assured there was nothing to fear about a possible burnout.

"*Mas maaga kong nakuha ang kundisyon,*

PACQUIAO/ A27

Ababa powers RP to 6th in Nomura

JONEL ABABA SHOT A ONE-OVER-PAR 73 yesterday as the Philippines assembled a 229 total for sixth place after 18 holes of the 23rd Nomura Cup at the wind-swept Sunrise Golf and Country Club in Taipei.

The reed-thin product of the National Caddies' Open was the best Filipino scorer with the usually steady Mark Fernando only managing a 78 like Tonlits Asistio under tough playing conditions.

James Ryan Lam, a 19-year-old first time internationalist, shot a 79 and did not count.

Ababa was tied for fifth in the individual race being paced by Korean Bi Oh Kim and Danny Lee who pooled 70s.

Tamura Naoki of Japan and Malaysia's Haziq Hamizan assembled identical 72s for third in the event also known as the Asia-Pacific championship.

Bi's 70 boosted the Koreans to a leading 218 aggregate, two ahead of the Japanese and another two shots in front of rock-solid New Zealand.

Australia and Thailand have identical 225s for a fourth place tie.

The Philippines finished fifth in the last staging of this event two years ago and non-playing captain Caloy Coscoluella said the respectable start was enough reason for the country to expect a better performance in Taipei.

"I have never seen a golf course with winds like this," said Coscoluella of the tough conditions in a text message to the INQUIRER.

Coscoluella took a hastily formed team to Taipei after the NGAP's erstwhile backer, ICTSI pulled out its players from the RP Team at the last minute.

Musong R. Castillo

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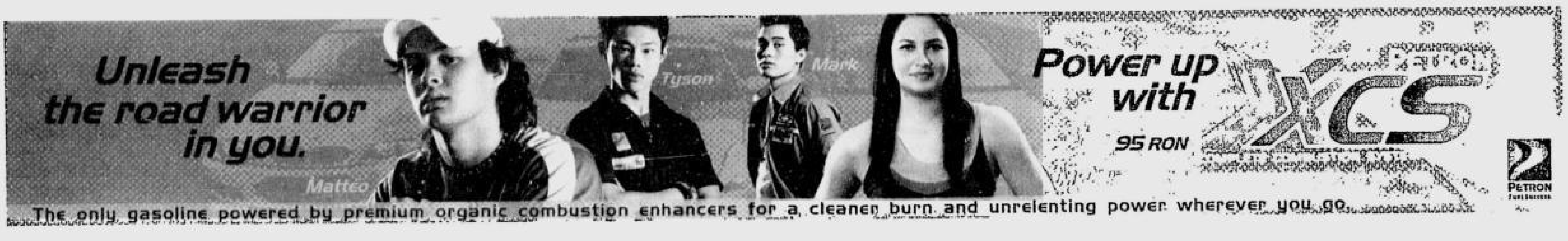
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Pacquiao could win by repeating himself

BARE EYE

Recab Trinidad

LAS VEGAS—MANNY PACQUIAO, A merciless lefty, knows a great right hand when he sees one.

He had a full, bright view of that right punch on Saturday.

He also won a few friendly dollars betting on that punch.

The deadly shot was thrown by Kelly Pavlik, also known as The Ghost, in his world middleweight title fight against the undefeated Jermain Taylor.

* * *

Before we go further, it must be noted that the punch that mesmerized Pacquiao into picking a fighter who was clearly on the losing end, was not that booming baseball bat of a facial slam Taylor received with disfiguring, devastating impact in the seventh round.

No, it was another one, although practically of the same edition.

* * *

It's like this. Taylor floored Pavlik in the second round and was highly favored to finish the job in the third.

Nobody in his right mind, therefore, would put money on Pavlik, even if he happened to be his brother.

Still, Pavlik came back from the dead, like a real ghost, to score some good shots.

One of these great punches, Pacquiao saw very clearly in the third round.

* * *

To repeat: Pavlik was, pure and simple, on the losing end.

But before the fourth round of the title fight could start, Pacquiao challenged his boys at the Palazzo to a friendly bet.

He dared them to wager against Pavlik.

Not only that. He offered a handicap, their two dollars against three on his side.

* * *

Well, practically everybody around took the blind dare.

What followed were some of the finest moments in middleweight boxing.

Now, to make the long story short, Pacquiao ended up picking up a bundle.

Pavlik, as Pacquiao must've expected ahead, went on to stop Taylor in the seventh.

* * *

It was not a exactly a big killing Pacquiao made.

But the take must've been big enough to buy a gift for his boyhood buddy and trainer Buboy Fernandez, who celebrated his birthday yesterday.

* * *

Listen please. In case you missed that great right hand, here's a tip.

If you come to visit at Wild Card, there's a replica of that great right punch on a torn-out newspaper page pasted on the right side of the entrance.

And the one hitting with the baseball bat, in its gory impact, was Manny Pacquiao himself.

This happened in the Pacman's first fight with Marco Antonio Barrera, whom he stopped in 2003.

* * *

No need to report that Pacquiao, before leaving for this city, was seen several afternoons perfecting his right hand.

Pacquiao, a left-handed original, is definitely no copycat.

But, going by the trend, it won't come as a surprise if he copies the Pavlik right shot against Barrera here on Saturday (Sunday morning in Manila).

In truth, the effort won't amount to plagiarism.

Pacquiao, if he scores that big, killer right again, would simply be repeating himself.

Olympic crack for RP jins in Vietnam

By Marc Anthony Reyes

MANCHESTER, ENGLAND—EVEN BEfore leaving this city, the Philippine taekwondo jins have already set their eyes on Vietnam.

As soon as they hit home, the three RP bets who blew their bid in the World Taekwondo Olympic Qualifying tournament will buckle down to work and prepare for another crack at the Beijing 2008 Olympics via the Asian Qualifying event, according to the Philippine Taekwondo Association.

Tshomlee Go again nailed an Olympic slot through the World qualifying here, duplicating his feat in 2004.

"We are happy with this because we know it's never going to be easy," said PTA executive vice president Sung Hong Chon.

As proof of the tough competition, Spain and Thailand, both powered by World and Asian champions, failed to produce an Olympic qualifier over the weekend.

In contrast, Korea sent in four of four, while Chinese Taipei was 2-of-4.

Each country is allowed a maximum of four jins—two men and two women—in the eight Olympic categories.

In the Asian Qualifying for the 2000 Sydney Olympics held in Manila, the Philippines managed to qualify four through Donald Geisler, Eva Marie Ditan, Jasmine Strachan and Roberto Cruz, now head of the men's team.

Four years later, Go squeezed into the Athens Olympic roster by winning a bronze in the France Worlds, while Mary Antoinette Rivero and Geisler made it via the Asian selection held in Thailand.

Rivero, Alexander Briones and Kathleen Eunice Alora failed to keep up with Go here but they can still earn slots in the Vietnam qualifying starting Nov. 29.

The RP jins, rated highly along with the boxers in the country's bid to win a first Olympic gold, are also busy preparing for the Southeast Asian Taekwondo Union on Oct. 10-15 in Vietnam and the SEA Games in Thailand in December.

DINDO Pumaren: Expect 40 minutes of hell from UE. PDI PHOTO

FRANZ Pumaren: We place emphasis on defense. PDI PHOTO

PUMAREN VS PUMAREN

We're the same, we're different

By Jasmine W. Payo

GAME THURSDAY
(Araneta Coliseum)
3 p.m.—Univ. of the East vs La Salle
(Game 1, best-of-three Finals)

MORE THAN JUST A FAMILY FEUD, THE 2007 UAAP Finals will be a testament to the winning system of this band of basketball brothers.

The Pumaren siblings—Franz of La Salle and younger brother Dindo of University of the East—will go to the best-of-three championship series toting similar game strategies that have revolutionized local collegiate basketball.

"If you're going to dissect the team profile, one thing you'll notice that . . . there's discipline," said Franz of his Green Archers. "We [place] emphasis on defense. The players have their respective roles. There are no superstars in our team."

"We're always well-prepared and well-organized," said Dindo of his Warriors. "Our defense creates our offense. The emphasis in college basketball is to have the most number of possessions. Our trademark is [giving the enemy] 40 minutes of hell."

Franz and Dindo may try to outwit each other using familiar plays, but both plan to throw in surprises of their own.

"If you scrutinize it, there's a difference [in style]," Franz said during the PSA Forum yesterday at Shakey's UN Avenue. "Looking [from] outside, you will say what we're doing is almost the same. We have different philosophies lately. We adjust [according] to the materials that we have. There's a variation, I guess. But what's always the same is the aggressive pressing defense."

On his "loaded lineup," Dindo said: "We have a balanced team. Even our second group can start. Our players' playing minutes are well balanced. No one plays more than 22 or 23 minutes. Unlike La Salle, their key players average about 29 to 30 minutes."

Yet both credit their successful systems to their father Pilo and elder brother Derick, who also steered Talk 'N Text to the PBA Finals in the last conference.

Before Franz took over in 1998, Derick mentored the Archers from 1986 to 1991, a stint highlighted by back-to-back titles in 1989 and 1990.

And three decades before Dindo steered UE back to the spotlight, Pilo called the shots for the Warriors, who bagged the UAAP championship in 1975, 1976 and 1979.

"Modesty aside, I think the program that I put up at La Salle—whether the other schools will agree or not—became the barometer of college basketball," Franz said in the forum sponsored by Pagcor and Shakey's UN Avenue. "The mere fact that we're consistently in the top four every year is already a validation of the program."

Task force doubts Figueroa scores

By June Navarro

FIGUEROA

THE INCLUSION OF FORMER Olympian Jasmine Figueroa in the Southeast Asian Games roster is under question.

Figueroa was asked to undergo a series of tryouts by the SEAG Task Force due to what it said was a dubious score by the 2004 Athens Olympic Games campaigner during a qualifying test conducted by the National Archery Association of the Philippines.

"There was no formal notice of that tryout so the task force decided to conduct a special shoot-out two weeks from now (for Jasmine) to see if she really should be in the delegation," SEAG Task Force deputy chief Mark Joseph told the INQUIRER.

Figueroa, who failed to win a SEAG medal in the 2005 Manila Games, surpassed the qualifying mark of 101 points by scoring 105 in the tryout conducted by the NAAP last July.

The swimming chief said PSC Commissioner Ritchie Garcia, who monitors the progress of the archery team in the task force, has raised serious doubts on the integrity of the NAAP tryout.

Prior to the NAAP-supervised tryout, Figueroa scored only 87 in the women's recurve event of the Asian Archery Championships held in Xian, China, last month, one of the qualifying tournaments for the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

Categorized as a Class A athlete, Figueroa raised a stir during the Athens Olympics by beating the world champion in one match. She failed to win a medal in the Olympics and SEA Games.

Tuason Racing drivers 1-2 in Touring Car

TUASON RACING MAINSTAYS STUART MacDonald and Juny Binamira destroyed the opposition by finishing 1-2 in the fifth leg of the 2007 Philippine Touring Car Championship (PTCC) series held recently at the Subic International Raceway.

The duo turned back veteran drivers in the Group 3 division to deliver the first major victory for the Tuason Racing Team.

The win was achieved despite wet track conditions and the fact that their Ford Focus vehicle is heavier than the Honda Civic units that most drivers used.

"We're thrilled with the performance of the whole team headed by team manager Michael Tuason," said Glen Dasig, sales and marketing AVP of Ford Group Philippines.

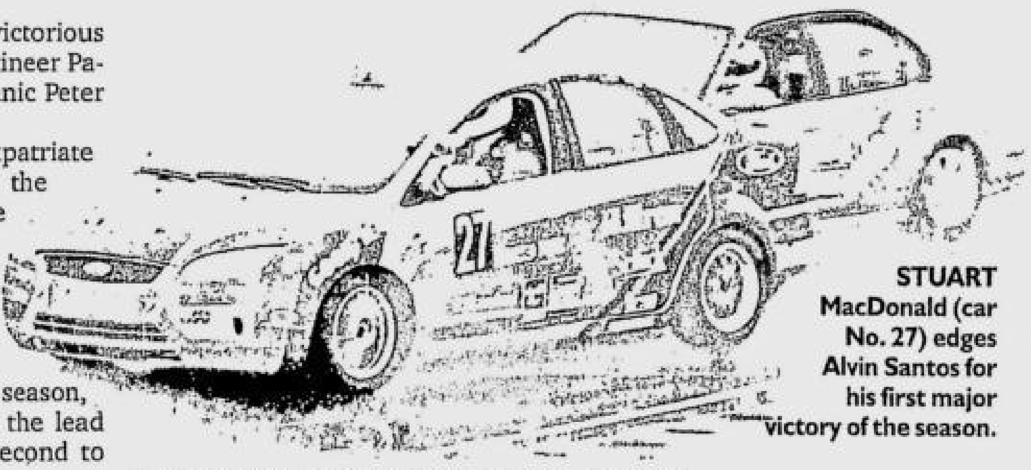
Other members of the victorious Tuason team were chief engineer Pacho Blanco and chief mechanic Peter Lubon.

MacDonald, a British expatriate who finished runner-up in the morning race, held on to the lead all throughout the afternoon session to snap Alvin Santos' nine-race winning streak.

Binamira, seeing action for only the second time this season, managed to hold briefly to the lead but eventually wound up second to MacDonald.

Santos, who still lead the race for rookie honors, made several tries to slip past MacDonald, even going for a desperate dive in the fourth lap. But his attempt backfired as he hit MacDonald's back fender and the damaged to his car forced him out of the race.

The bump slowed down MacDonald a bit, allowing Binamira to temporarily take the lead.



STUART MacDonald (car No. 27) edges Alvin Santos for his first major victory of the season.

S. Lucia Tour bets tackle Bangkok course today

BANGKOK, THAILAND—IT'S GOING TO BE AN entirely different experience for 188 club members when they compete in the Sta. Lucia Tour today and tomorrow in two different courses here.

First-day play in the 36-hole competition organized by giant real estate firm Sta. Lucia for members of clubs flying its banner splits the huge field into two. The championship Class A and Class B entries play the Lam Lukka course and the Class C and Class D bets tackle the Lakewood layout.

The players switch courses tomorrow in what promises to be an exciting team and individual showdown in an unfamiliar battleground among members of some of the country's most popular golf clubs.

The 188-strong roster is believed to be the largest group of Philippine club members assembled to play a golf tournament abroad. Though there are a few foreign expatriates in the cast, more than 90 percent of those who came here are Filipinos.

Represented in the tournament sponsored by Samsung, Callaway, Philippine Airlines and Thai Airways are Alta Vista of Cebu, Eagle Ridge of Cavite, Lakewood of Cabanatuan, Orchard of Cavite, Rancho Palos Verdes of Davao and Royale Tagaytay and Summit Point of Batangas.

Alta Vista is the defending Tour champion, prevailing over Palos Verdes and Eagle Ridge in a course-hopping series played over five courses last year.

The Cebuanos have come to Thailand in full force, fielding the biggest lineup of 58 golfers.

SPORTSWATCH

Antonio regains No. 1

GRANDMASTER ROGELIO "JOEY" ANtonio regained the No. 1 position among the country's chess players based on the newest World Chess Federation (Fide ratings) released Oct. 1.

Antonio improved his Elo rating to 2540 from 2532 during the July 2007 list to dislodge Asia's first GM Eugene Torre, who slid from 2536 to 2532.

World Junior championship campaigner IM Wesley So also made a big jump from 2516 in the previous list to 2531, edging GM Mark Paragua, who dropped to 2514 from 2525.

The biggest gain was made by newly installed GM Darwin Laylo, who moved up to fifth place with an Elo of 2508 from 2486.

Laylo, who secured his GM title during the recent Asian Individual Championship and qualified for the World Chess Cup in Khanty-Mansiysk, Russia, next month, was removed from the list during his six-month suspension for his alleged role in the game-fixing controversy last year. He was put back in the list following his strong performance in the 11-round Asian tournament. *Marlon Bernardino, Contributor*

Tanauan Open up Oct. 12

THE P200,000 TANAUAN OPEN, CENterpiece event of the 2007 Calabarzon Chess festival, comes off the wraps on Oct. 12 to 14 at the Tanauan gym in Tanauan City, Batangas.

The country's leading players, led by Grandmasters Rogelio Antonio Jr. and Eugene Torre, have confirmed their participation in the nine-round tournament.

For inquiries, call Gigi Flanel-Masangkay at 893-8501 and 892-5462 or text 0920-9231150.

Olivarez triumphs

STA. ROSA, LAGUNA—JED OLIVAREZ whipped Jamie Gabayan, 6-3, 6-1, in the unisex 10-under division in the South Luzon regional eliminations of the 2007 Milo Junior Tennis Cup over the weekend at the Sta. Rosa Sports Center claycourts here—to earn a shot at the Malaysia grand prizes.

Olivarez thus qualified for the National Finals together with Mark Scares, Dheo Talatayod and Medeline Ramos.

Fast-moving Tacuyan son shocks Tipon in nat'l meet

By Dennis Eroa
Inquirer Libre Sports Editor

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—TALL AND FAST, Orlando Tacuyan Jr. of Angeles City scored the biggest win of his young career as he shocked Doha Asian Games gold medalist Joan Tipon, 26-24, in the Smart National Boxing Open late Monday here.

Due to weight problems, Tipon, also a gold medalist in the 2005 Manila Southeast Asian Games, was forced to fight not as a bantamweight but as a featherweight and this proved disastrous against Tacuyan, the sleek-moving son of former national champion and a policewoman based at Camp Crame.

A member of the national training pool, the 19-year-old, 5-foot-9 Tacuyan used his longer reach to pile up points to the delight of the crowd infront of the Misamis Oriental Capitol.

Obviously tired, Tipon failed to overhaul the deficit as Tacuyan danced away from trouble.

"*Masaya po ako dahil kahit papano, nakabawi po ako sa kanya* (Tipon) (I'm happy because I got even with him)," said Tacuyan.

It was the first victory for Tacuyan in three meetings with Tipon.

Manny Lopez, president of the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines, said the loss "should be a wake-up call for him (Tipon), that he can be beaten by upcoming boxers."

Tacuyan noted that Tipon was tired after losing in the finals of last week's ranking tournament in Czech Republic to Hungarian David Oltvanyi.

Tacuyan, who has been with the national training pool for four years, now looms as a gold medal prospect in the weeklong tournament serving as performance test by ABAP for upcoming pool members.

Also advancing were Rey Enoc (Iligan city), Emerson Morcoso (Bulacan) and Vergil Basadre (Misamis Oriental) in the 57-kg class.

Also advancing in the 51-kg category were Philippine Army's Violito Payla, Frederick Rodriguez of Malaybalay, Bukidnon and Rhiel Mandate (Cebu City).

Payla, also a gold medalist in Doha, proved too strong against Calinan, Davao City's Welbert Apas, producing the quickest victory for the night—a referee-stopped contest due to injury, with still 1:46 minutes to go in the first round; while Mandate won over Rex Saludar of Davao Del Norte-B in the same fashion—an RSC due to body blows, with still 1:47 to go in the second round.

Rockies advance to NL playoffs by a run

WINNING PLAY: Colorado's Matt Holliday beats San Diego catcher Michael Barrett to score the winning run that sent the Rockies straight into the playoffs. AP

NEW YORK—THE COLORADO Rockies rallied for three runs in a stunning 13th inning to beat the San Diego Padres, 9-8, in a National League wild-card thriller and advance to the playoffs on Monday.

Jamey Carroll's sacrifice fly to right field drove home Matt Holliday to send the celebrating Rockies to the NL Division Series playoffs against the Phillies in Philadelphia beginning on Wednesday.

The win was the 14th in 15 games for Colorado, which had fallen behind, 8-6, in the top of the 13th on Scott Hairston's two-run homer for San Diego.

Kazuo Matsui doubled to deep right center to begin the Rockies' rally. Troy Tulowitzki drove him home with a double to deep center to narrow San Diego's advantage to 8-7.

Holliday then tripled to deep right to tie the score at 8-8.

After Todd Helton was intentionally walked, Carroll's sacrifice fly to right completed the Rockies's wild ride to the postseason.

Mets meltdown

The Rockies meet a Phillies squad that reached the postseason because of a major New York Mets meltdown of historic proportions that sent the New Yorkers tumbling out of the postseason picture.

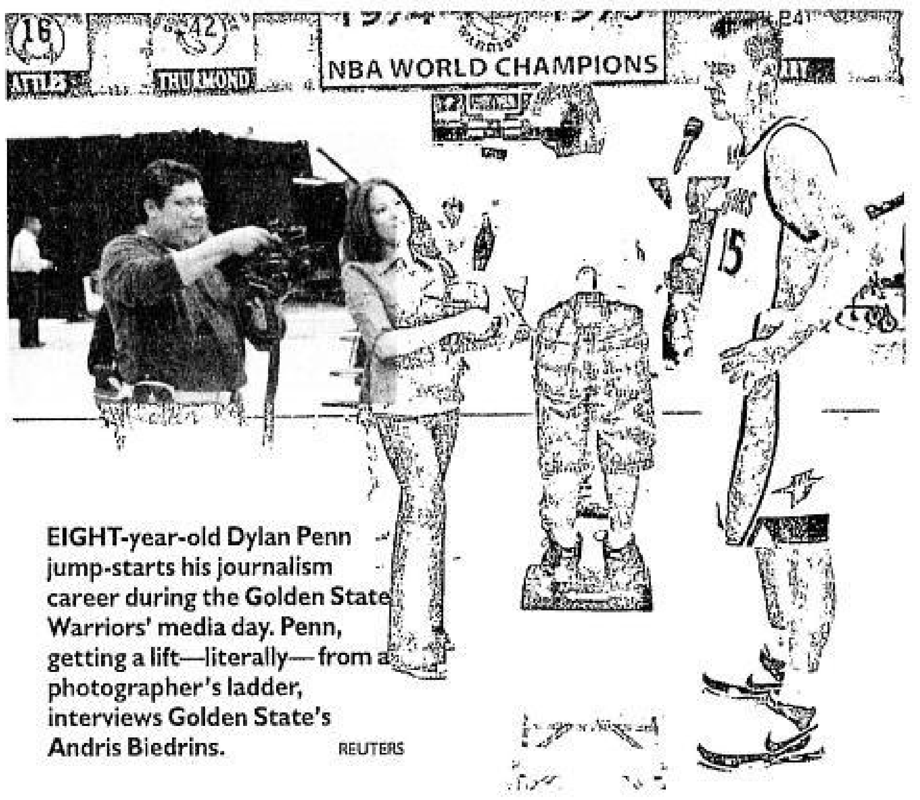
And the domino effect could include a shake-up at Shea Stadium.

The Mets let a seven-game lead slip through their fingers in their last 17 games of the season by going 5-12, including two five-game losing streaks. They went 1-6 at home in the final week.

"I'm a big boy," manager Willie Randolph told reporters after Sunday's 8-1 loss to the last-place Florida Marlins finished off the Mets. "I know how things work. I know I'm accountable for my job." *Reuters*

NBA PRESEASON

Garnett battles T'wolves



EIGHT-year-old Dylan Penn jump-starts his journalism career during the Golden State Warriors' media day. Penn, getting a lift—literally—from a photographer's ladder, interviews Golden State's Andris Biedrins. REUTERS

NEW YORK—GET READY FOR Kevin Garnett vs. the Timberwolves—in London.

Two months after making the National Basketball Association's biggest offseason trade, Boston and Minnesota will meet in one of the featured games on the NBA Europe Live tour.

The Memphis Grizzlies and Toronto Raptors also are holding training camps and will play exhibition games overseas, giving European stars such as Pau Gasol and Andrea Bargnani the chance to play in front of their home fans.

Games are also scheduled in Turkey, Rome and Spain, with NBA teams matched against a European club in four of them. The game between Minnesota and Boston is getting the most attention in the United States.

"It's probably going to be a lot of emotions because of the guys that have been traded," Boston's Paul Pierce said. "So it's probably going to mean more to them than it does to me as they've been traded, but will be interesting as there are going to be a lot of new guys."

The Timberwolves traded Garnett, their longtime superstar, to the Celtics in a 7-for-1 trade—the most players swapped for one player in NBA history. And Minnesota coach Randy Wittman thinks it's more important to figure out which of them can play than trying to top Garnett in the Oct. 10 game.

"Everybody is going to build that up as a huge game because of the trade of Kevin Garnett to Boston, but I can't look at it that way," Wittman said. "I wouldn't give myself and my teammates a service if I am going to play five guys to win the game when I've got to figure out the makeup of my team. That's what exhibition games and practice are for."

Al Jefferson, Ryan Gomes, Gerald Green, Theo Ratliff and Sebastian Telfair are the former Celtics on the Minnesota roster. The Wolves play the first game of the tour Saturday in Istanbul against Turkish team Efes Pilsen, whose coach, American David Blatt, led Russia to a surprising title at the European championships. *AP*

Pacquiao . . .

From page A25

pero walang dapat ikatakot (I hit my peak early, but it's just perfect)," Pacquiao explained during a brief break in his final workout in Los Angeles.

"Excited *na talaga ko, sana laban na* (I'm excited already, I hope it's fight time)" he told a television interviewer.

There was no outright manifestation of distaste over the rematch, but it's safe to say fans would have been more enthusiastic if a younger, stronger foe has instead been lined up against Pacquiao, who four years ago had knocked out Barrera in Texas.

Pacquiao is enjoying his bountiful summer in boxing, while Barrera, if not exactly overstaying, is clearly in the last quarter of his career.

"I'm picking Pacquiao to win it between rounds one to seven," former senator Robert Jaworski told the INQUIRER after dropping by Pacquiao's training camp in LA yesterday.

Jaworski however said things could just turn mysterious in scoring if the fight lasts 12 rounds.

"A lot of honor is at stake, so we can never tell," Jaworski, looking fit in a light blue long-sleeved shirt, explained.

He will be at ringside, together with other celebrities and politicians from the Philippines, on Saturday.

NBC president Padilla welcomes American reinforcement McDaniel as second import Steven Broom and other members of the NBC-Spring Cooking Oil team look on.

NBC five plays Japan today

HUA LIEN, TAIWAN—THE NATIONAL Basketball Conference (NBC) Selection opens its campaign in the annual Kwah Hu Cup Probation Basketball Invitational here against Japan at 11:30 a.m. today.

Beefed up by 6-foot-5 American Michael Anthony Daniel and 6-9 Australian Steven Bloom and composed of NBC's top performers, the RP squad is optimistic of doing well in the tournament.

Other members of the team coached by Boysie Zamar are Marlon Kalaw, Don Villamin, Mar Reyes, Larry Rodriguez, Jeff Tajonera and ex-pros Nino Marquez, Marlon Legaspi, Nelson Asaytono and EJ Feihl.

The NBC cagers are bracketed in Group B with Japan, local clubs Dancin and Media and USA-Velocity Athletics.

Making up Group A are Taiwan Beer, Pu Yuan, Yulon, Kyung Hee and Malaysia.

The teams will play one round, with the top finishers clashing in the finals.

The NBC Selection will meet USA at 1:30 p.m. tomorrow, Dacin at 3:30 on Oct. 5 and Media at 3:30 on Oct. 6. The finals and consolation games will be played on Oct. 7.

NBC president and Spring Cooking Oil team owner Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla is confident that the addition of quality imports "could help the team succeed after narrowly missing the finals two years ago."

In 2005, an all-Filipino NBC squad led by Samigue Eman and KG Canaleta dropped a close decision to the Europeans-backed Joeutai for the No. 1 spot in their group.

Padilla and league EVP and Tagaytay Mayor Bambol Tolentino bankrolled the trip of the team headed by sec-gen Tito Palma.

Hechanova tops Masters Challenge

JERIC HECHANOVA, LACKING IN PRACTICE and all, claimed overall low golf gross honors in the recent 11th Masters Challenge at the Masters course of the Manila Southwoods Golf and Country Club in Carmona, Cavite.

Busy in his job as general manager of the Camp John Hay Golf Club in Baguio City, Hechanova said he played games in his mind.

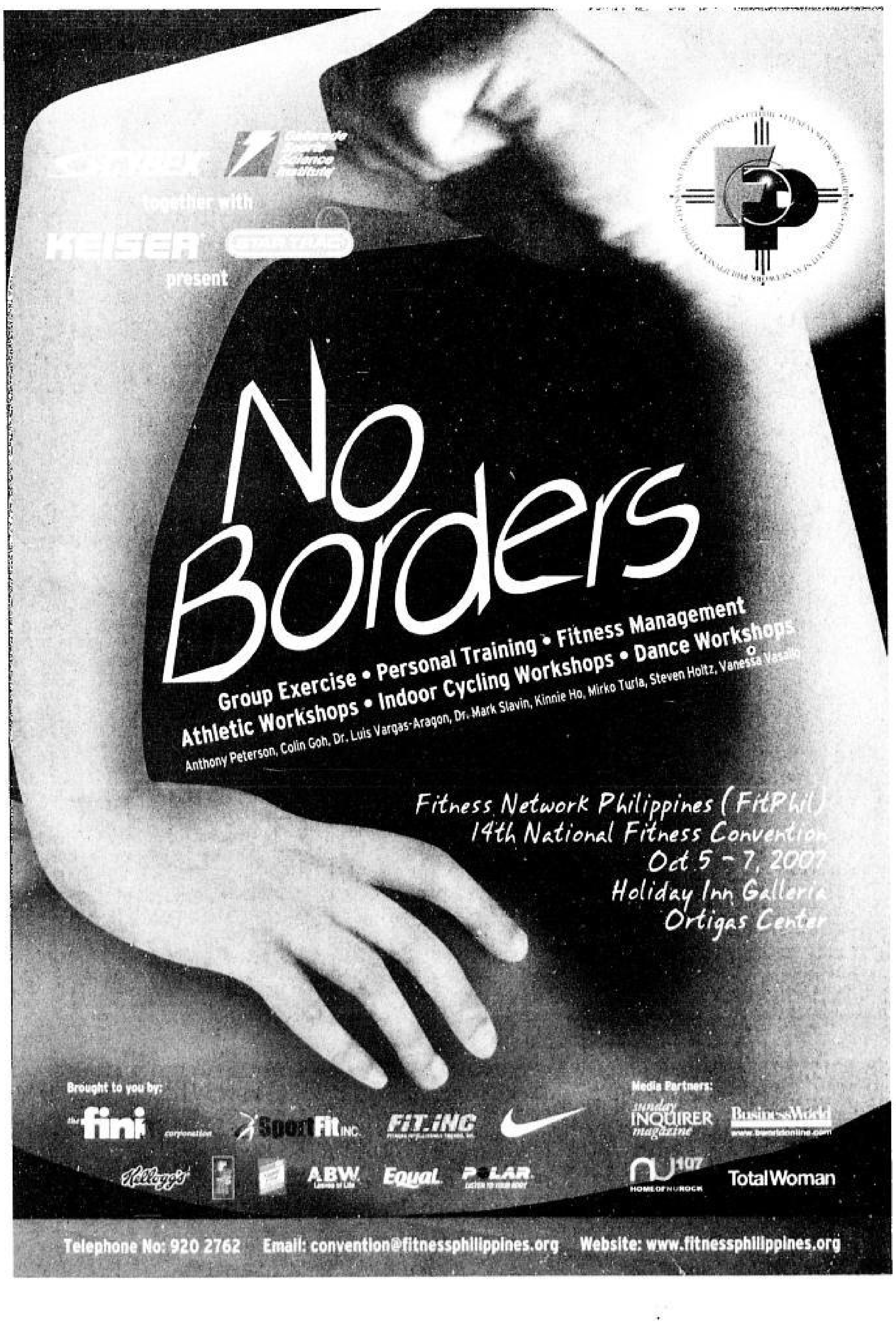
It worked as Hechanova, even after 15 holes, cushioned bogeys on Nos. 13 and 17 with a birdie on No. 18 for a one-over-par 73.

He bested Sunshine Baraquiel who also carded a 73 but had a higher handicap.

Jason Yu and Tony Lin took the title in the men's Divisions 1 and 2, respectively, in the one-day, fund-raising event organized by the Manila Southwoods Ladies Chapter.

Farrah Imperial (Ladies 1), Janese Carr (Ladies 2), Hanna See (Ladies 3) and Rudy Amata (Guests) were the other winners. Grace Atienza topped the Pacsports-Nike short game challenge and won a Nike Golf wedge.

No one won any of the hole-in-one prizes that included a Chery Car from Autohub, a pearl set from Jewelmer, a Royal Caribbean cruise and a stay in Boracay's Playa Asya Resort.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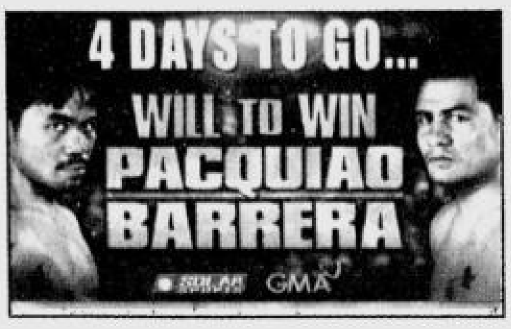
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Toni spurns offer to ride for Qatar

By Jasmine W. Payo

THE PHILIPPPINES NEARLY LOST ONE OF its finest equestriennes.

Asian Games veteran Toni Leviste politely turned down an offer by Qatari head of state, Sheikh Mohamad Al Thani, to join the Qatar national equestrian team recently.

"He wanted to give me a Qatari citizenship because the Qatari team is composed of men," she said in a press conference Monday. "The Qatari team is the strongest in the world in terms of financial support.

"In fact, they're the only team 100-percent supported by their royalty. Of course, if I agreed to do it, I would not have to do what I'm doing now (look for financial support) to be able to continue."

But national pride prevailed for Leviste, the only Southeast Asian rider to compete in the Olympics, World Championships and World Cup Finals.

"To be honest, I was tempted," she said. "One, it's an honor. Two, what a great privilege to do what you love and not worry where the funds will be coming from. I can concentrate on training, to better myself and to be on top of the game.

LEVISTE

"But when I go in there and [ride under] the Qatari flag, it will mean nothing to me. There will be no passion in what I do if I'm riding under another flag. It will be meaningless."

Leviste plans to compete aboard Swedish mare Globe Platinum Just Jewels in the Arab League circuit early next year to earn qualifying points for the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

But the charming athlete has also set her focus to help defend the Philippine team's gold-medal in the SEA Games in December.

"In equestrian, the older you are, the better you become; so this is my prime," she said.

Doves, Lightnings forge title clash

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI COLLEGE GOT timely baskets in the extra period to oust defending champion Emilio Aguinaldo College, 76-69, in their sixth Universities and Colleges Athletic Association (UCAA) basketball semifinal clash at The Arena in San Juan.

The Doves set up a best-of-three finals battle with the Asian College of Science and Technology Lightnings starting on Saturday.

Leomer Losentes paced the Doves with 22 points, including a drive and a triple at the start of the overtime period.

Acsat beat Las Piñas College, 85-83, on Monday to bag the first finals slot.

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4. Maaaring ipunin ang mga coupons para sa mas malaking discount. Ang mga naipon na coupon ay walang halaga at di maaaring magamit sa pagbili ng kahit anumang SEAOIL product.
5. Ang LangiSulit promo ay mula October 1 hanggang December 15, 2007. Ang discount ay maaari pa rin makuha hanggang sixty (60) days pagkatapos ng promo period.
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SEAOIL Provides True Value for the Price-conscious Motorist

In this financially upsetting time in our country's economy, most consumers continue to take steps in saving their hard earned money as they avoid making unnecessary expenses, and instead give more importance to their basic needs such as food, clothing and transportation which most, if not all Filipinos make use of on a daily basis, whether they take public transportation, or use their own vehicles.

With the rising cost of gasoline and providing the proper care and maintenance for their vehicles being of primary concern, most motorists have resorted to various ways of getting the most value for their money, without sacrificing the much desired mileage and protection for their engines that they usually get from their preferred lubricant brand.

Putting their customers' satisfaction first, SEAOIL introduces a motor oil formulated to meet the Japanese Automotive Standards Organization's 4T motorcycle engine specifications, and to provide superior engine protection and performance under the most demanding conditions, the SEAOIL 4T POWER 4-Stroke Motor Oil.

The 4T POWER Motor Oil is a blend of high quality mineral base stocks and performance chemistry additives specially formulated for high-revving, high stress and high temperature 4-stroke motorcycle engines. It also features advanced engine wear protection, superior quality dispersion additives to prevent sludge build-up and high thermal stability for superior performance not found on most 4-stroke engine oils.

Aside from lubrication and protection, 4T Power has special components that keep your engine clean and free of unwanted deposits for unmatched engine efficiency. It's time to make the switch to SEAOIL's 4T Power 4-stroke Motor Oil, for lubrication that results in exceptional engine performance.

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To avail of the LangiSulit promo, customers must purchase one liter or gallon of any participating SEAOIL Lubricants such as 4T Power, GEO Supreme, DEO Max, GT 40/30, HDX 500 40/30/20/10, HD 200 SAE 40/30 and 2T XP. Customers will then receive a coupon with corresponding discounts on their gasoline and diesel products such as E10 G5 Extreme, E10 Unleaded, Bioexceed Diesel and Auto Gas-Excel. The coupon can be instantly redeemed at the SEAOIL station where the purchase was made, or they can be collected for bigger discounts.

Hurry and avail of this great offer from SEAOIL. The LangiSulit promo runs from October 1 to December 15, 2007. For more information, see posters and print ads, or visit the SEAOIL Station nearest you.

SPORTS WATCH

SJC stagfest Round 2 today

THE SECOND ROUND of the SM Farms Open 6-Stag Derby kicks off at 2 p.m. at the San Juan Coliseum with some 80 fights backed by Sagupaan Complexor 3000. Last Monday's round was dominated by Butchoy Olano, Rep. Gerry "Boy" Espina, Jun Manguera, Manny Garcia, Allan Chan and Rodolfo Pineda who tallied three wins each. Guaranteed prize is P8,800 for an entry fee of P8,800, said hosts Sam Mendoza, Boy Torres and Doc Jovy.

Makati 7-stag derby slated

THE WTJ SPORTS and Amusement Corp. presents the "Bigtime Salpukan" 7-stag derby on Oct. 24 at the Makati Coliseum. All participants must field all seven stags in one-day, win or lose, according tod promoters Lito Orillaza, Rudy Salud and William Co. Meanwhile, about 100 fights will be held on Saturday at the same venue via the Gold Quest Champions WRV 5-stag derby.

RACING TIPS

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Way To Go Heza (8), Visionary (2), Posse Comitatus (9), Taste N' See (1), Showgirl (4)
Race 2—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Doña Nene (7), Masiado (3), Stingray (2), Words Of Joy (4), Hammer It Home (5)
Race 3—Wild Orphan (4), Lovable Trisha (2), Iron King (6), Collective Dreams (1)
Race 4—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Kryptonite (10), Money For Rap (3), White Princess (4), Lady Inday (6), Dom Peri Pink (5)
Race 5—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Dark Cape (10), Grand Homer (1), White Diamond (4), Potchi (3), Dugo's Quest (2)
Race 6—Unang Apo (1), Celestial (2), Lovely Tara (4), Awesome Buddy/Kapit Bahay (6)
Race 7—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Jay Nicole (2), Now Showing (5), Harner (4), Cool Cielo (1), Go Go Elgene (6)
Race 8—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Raise A Dancer (1), Friendly Venture (12), Ingay Ingay (9), BMI Baby (13), Manila's Smile (4) Reptoid (6)

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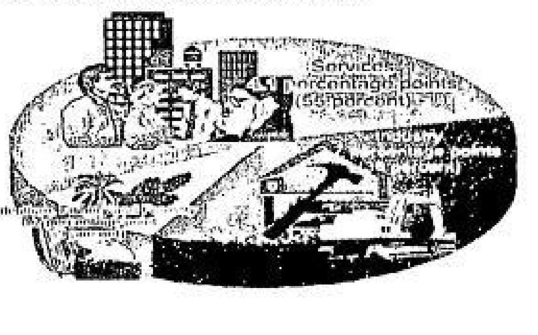
Stocks surge 2.2% on Wall St.'s record run

INQUIRER MONITOR
Figures that matter in our nation's life

Biggest GDP growth driver (2nd quarter 2007)

The service sector, which includes transportation, finance, trade and communication, posted the biggest contribution to the growth of gross domestic product in the second quarter of the year.



Source: National Statistical Coordination Board
Kate Pedroso Inquirer Research

PSEi hits 2-month high at 3,677.19

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

STOCKS ROSE TO A NEW TWO-MONTH HIGH after tracking the US market's meteoric gains overnight.

Local brokers said bets of another US Federal Reserve interest rate cut when the Fed meets later this month has fueled the rise in Wall Street overnight.

The 29-company Philippine Stock Exchange index rose 79.27 points or 2.2 percent to 3,677.19, its highest since July 24 when it stood at 3,706.24.

The index's closing level yesterday was also nearing the market's all time high of 3,791.42 set last July 5, data from the PSE showed.

Trading volume totaled 6.9 billion shares worth P6.6 billion.

Gainers swamped decliners 90 to 36, while 51 stocks were steady.

"Property and banking stocks have been receiving a boost from the expected rate cut on Thursday," said Lawrence de Leon of Accord Capital Equities.

"We've also seen several regional markets posting record levels and it's also helping push our market higher, although we have probably hit the ceiling at around 3,700 points."

STOCKS / B4

IN THIS ISSUE

- **7-year treasury** bond rate falls /B2
- **Bayan converts P4.4B** in advances into equity /B4
- **HSBC: OFW-fueled** growth can't be sustained /B8

HK economist sees ₱43:$1 this year, ₱41:$1 in '08

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PESO YESTERDAY ROSE TO A two-month high of 44.74 to a dollar before closing at 44.915 as some traders suspected strong central bank intervention to curb the sharp appreciation.

In a briefing, Hong Kong-based economist Frederic Neumann yesterday said the peso had more room to rise against the dollar on the back of strong remittances from overseas Filipinos.

Neumann said the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas had been trying to slow down the local currency's appreciation but this ability to hoard dollars was limited. By year's end, the HSBC economist predicted that the peso would firm up at 43 to a dollar.

By next year, he said the peso would average even stronger at 41 and further rally to 40 by end-2009.

Yesterday's close marked a slight decline from Monday's finish of 44.85:$1, but this still represented a gain of 8.6 percent since ending at 49.13 last year.

A local currency dealer said the BSP was heavily buying dollars near the intraday high in the morning, preventing the peso's further appreciation.

Yesterday's peak was the highest level hit by the peso since touching 44.70 last July 24.

Another currency trader said a breach of the crucial 44.70:$1 mark would mean a breakaway for the local currency.

Neumann said the BSP would have to be content with the rising peso as it could not resist the uptrend of currencies across emerging Asia.

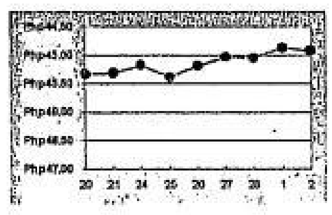
"Whenever it intervenes, it adds pesos to the system and if there's so much money in the system, the BSP has to siphon off," he said.

The economist said mopping up excess liquidity was equally costly because of the high rates the central bank was offering to keep these funds locked up in its high-yield special deposit accounts.

At the same time, he said the peso's sharp appreciation was significantly helping to temper the rise in the inflation rate. He noted that the country's inflation was unusually low for an economy that's growing by more than 7 percent.

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

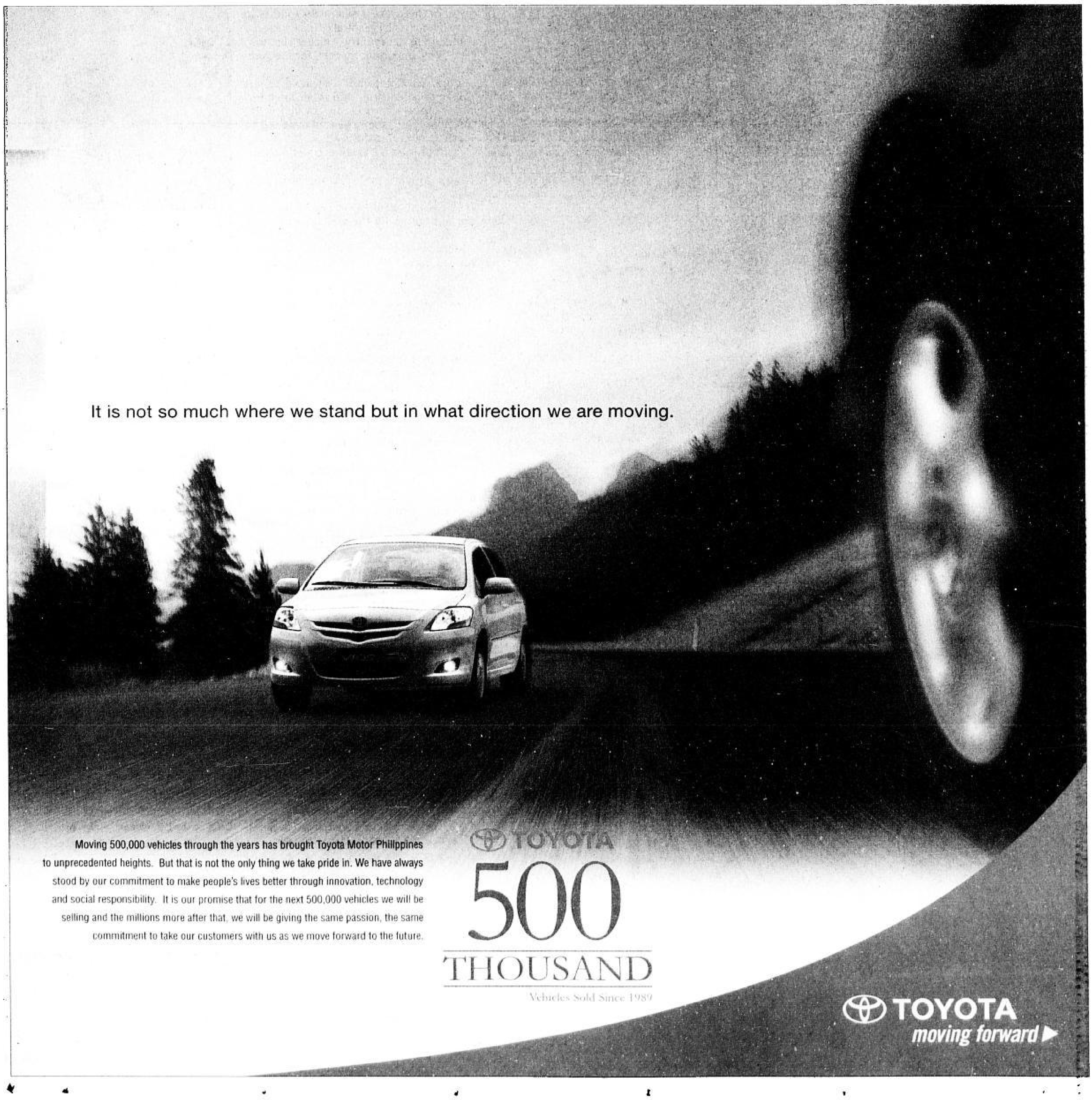


SEPTEMBER OCTOBER

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱44.915 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Oct. 2, 2007



It is not so much where we stand but in what direction we are moving.

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7-year treasury bond rate falls

From 7.125%, yield dipped to 6.5% yesterday

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE YIELD ON THE GOVERNMENT's seven-year treasury bonds fell sharply yesterday, ahead of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' monthly policy rate setting on Thursday.

In yesterday's auction of the Bureau of Treasury, the seven-year T-bond rate dipped to 6.5 percent from the previous coupon rate of 7.125 percent.

The P7 billion offering was oversubscribed, with P19.5 billion worth of tenders submitted during the auction, which marked the government's first offering of seven-year peso bonds in seven months.

"The rates fell due to expectations that the BSP will cut rates in its meeting on Monday," a trader said.

The trader said the peso's sharp appreciation was giving the BSP a stronger argument to slash its rates, but emerging inflation risks could also prompt the central bank to maintain the rates.

Market players are also concerned with the sustainability of the BSP's high-yielding special deposit accounts (SDA), which had successfully mopped up more than P400 billion worth of excess liquidity since this facility was transformed into a more powerful monetary tool in May.

Another banker said the drop in the T-bond rate yesterday to 6.5 percent "might be too aggressive."

"It's clearly liquidity-driven. Of course they will say that the government has less borrowings now, but it's a question of sustainability."

At this rate, he said the T-bonds would no longer be attractive to investors anymore.

Many traders are betting on a BSP rates cut following the surprise 50-basis point reduction by the US Federal Reserve last month.

The BSP 's overnight borrowing rate stands at 6 percent after a 150-basis point cut in July, when the central bank likewise scrapped a tiering system that paid declining interest rates on high volume of deposited funds.

Ahead of the interest rate setting on Thursday, however, the BSP has indicated caution over a potential surge in money supply in the fourth quarter and the skyrocketing oil prices—the two major risks to its inflation outlook.

BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo said a cut in the policy rates might or might not stop capital flows.

"Lower interest rates could mean banks taking their funds out of the BSP. That can contribute to higher liquidity in the system. So while you may have scope for bringing down the rates, you also have to look at the possible implications that will abet financial turbulence," he stressed.

Last week, the BSP reported that the growth in the country's domestic liquidity (m3) eased to 14.9 percent in August year-on-year from 18.7 percent in July. In August, however, there was a net outflow of "hot money" or portfolio investments in local stocks, bonds and money market given the global volatility and risk aversion triggered by the US subprime woes.

Domestic liquidity or m3 is the broadest measure of money and is used to estimate the supply of money in an economy.

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Rice program benefits outweigh cost of subsidy

By Amy R. Remo

PLANTING HYBRID RICE has saved the country as much as P13.9 billion in rice import cost since the Hybrid Rice Commercialization Program started in 2001, said an agriculture official.

Ginintuang Masaganang Ani Rice Program executive director Frisco Malabanan said this was the "accumulated value of incremental milled rice contributed by hybrid rice" from 2001 to the dry season of 2007.

"If we did not plant hybrid rice, this is the value of the rice we had to import," he said.

The cost of direct hybrid seed subsidy since 2001 was only P1.6 billion, Malabanan said.

Malabanan issued the statement in reaction to reports saying that "a sizeable amount of money and human resources spent on HRCP did not produce much social benefit."

On the contrary, Malabanan said, planting hybrid rice enabled farmers to harvest as much as 170 to 240 cavans a hectare, higher than their usual output of 100-120 cavans per hectare.

This translates to an increase in profit to about P50,000 a hectare from P15,000.

Last crop year, 318,466 hectares were planted to hybrid rice. For this year, the target was set at 400,000 hectares.

For 2008, the GMA rice program targets to cover 500,000 hectares, which will be increased to at least 600,000 hectares in 2010.

Malabanan said the subsidy for hybrid rice would likely continue until next year due to its contribution to the farm sector.

"Local governments and farmers have also appealed to us not to stop the seed subsidy," Malabanan said.

He said the seed subsidy was no longer 100 percent, which was the rate when the program started in 2001.

"Seed subsidy is now only P1,000 for a 20-kilo bag. Seeds cost between P2,400 and P3,000 per bag," he said.

Of the proposed P2.4-billion budget for the GMA rice program in 2008, some P500 million will be earmarked for the hybrid rice program.

Western Union expands RP operations

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By Ronnel W. Domingo and Riza T. Olchondra

MONEY TRANSFER SERVICES FIRM Western Union Co. is adding 800 outlets in the Philippines by yearend as it pays special attention to the country, which it claims to be a "very important market" for the company.

Christina Gold, chief executive of the Colorado-based firm, said in an interview that its local network now covered 6,300 locations. This, she said, was expected to reach 7,100 within the year.

"Our priority is convenience for our customers, that is why it is important for us to put up (as many outlets as we can)," Gold said.

"We want customers to be able to go to our locations with the greatest ease," she added.

Gold said the firm's Philippine expansion formed part of Western Union's global expansion strategy.

"Five years ago we had 120,000 locations worldwide. Today, we already have 312,000 (outlets)," she said. "By the end of the year we will have 325,000."

Last month, Western Union announced it signed new, multi-year agreements with three of its top agents in the Philippines—Universal Storefront Services Corp., e-Business Services Inc. and PetNet Inc. It recently signed up three new agents—Direct Agent 5 Inc., JP Tambunting Pawnshops and Davao-based retail chain Emcor Inc.

"(We are very aware) that the Philippines is the fourth largest receiver of remittances in the world according to the World Bank," Gold said, noting Bangko Sentral estimates that placed money transfers from abroad at about $14 billion in 2007.

GOLD
RUDY ESPERAS

Western Union is also developing a mobile remittance system and micro-lending program also in line with its expansion in the country.

At present, the company offers store-based and online remittance services.

Gold said at the Managament Association of the Philippines CEO Conference yesterday that the company was testing mobile systems with undisclosed carriers.

She added that the company wanted to offer a complementary micro-lending scheme that would extend $100 to $100,000 in loans.

These loans, she said, would be aimed at providing capital to customers who were deemed "high credit-risk" by traditional lending institutions.

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APC secures $380-M loan

Group of foreign, local banks to provide funds

By Abigail L. Ho

SN ABOITIZ POWER INC. (SNAP), a joint venture between Aboitiz Power Corp. and Norway's SN Power, has secured a $380-million loan to partially finance the balance of the $530-million purchase price of the 360-megawatt (MW) Magat hydropower facility in Isabela.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, APC corporate secretary M. Jasmine Oporto said the loan came from a consortium composed of the International Finance Corp., Nordic Investment Bank, Banco de Oro-EPCI Inc., Bank of the Philippine Islands, China Banking Corp., Development Bank of the Philippines, The Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corp. Ltd., Philippine National Bank and Security Bank.

Of the $380-million loan, $160 million represents the dollar component while the peso component is P11.5 billion.

Oporto said the loan would be used for the Magat facility acquisition and for the refinancing of a $159-million loan from Aboitiz Equity Ventures and shareholders' advances.

SNAP took over the operation of the Magat plant in April, following its remittance of the $371-million down payment to Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp.

The joint venture last year won the bidding for the plant with an offer of $530 million, edging out lone competitor First Generation Northern Energy Corp.

Philex posts ₱1.08B in gold, copper output

By Amy R. Remo

PUBLICLY LISTED PHILEX MINing Corp. said it had produced P1.08 billion worth of gold and copper last month.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, Philex chair and CEO Walter W. Brown said 810,884 dry metric tons of disseminated copper and gold ore were delivered to and treated at the Banget floatation facilities.

This resulted in shipments of 7,080 dry metric tons of copper concentrates, with an average copper content of 25.99 percent, 58.43 grams per dry metric ton of gold and 55.63 grams per dry metric ton of silver.

According to the disclosure, the shipment consisted of an equivalent metal content of 1.84 million kilograms (4.06 million lbs) of copper; 414,001 grams (13,310 ounces) of gold and 393,851 grams (12,663 ounces) of silver.

Philex said it had more than doubled its profit in the first seven months of the year to P3.1 billion from year-ago's P1.4 billion.

Brown earlier said he was optimistic that this trend would continue until the end of the year.

CEB sees Manila as major connection hub in Asia

CEBU PACIFIC HAS STARTED flying from Hong Kong or Taipei to Bangkok, Shanghai, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur and Singapore, with Manila as the transit station.

Candice Iyog, CEB vice president for marketing and product, said "these international connections will position the country as a travel hub and we plan to offer more destinations as we further expand our regional operations."

The Hong Kong and Taipei flights to Bangkok, Shanghai or Singapore and vice versa are offered daily. Connections will be four times weekly to Kuala Lumpur and three times to Jakarta.

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Bayan converts ₱4.4B in advances into equity

By Riza T. Olchondra

BAYAN TELECOMMUNICATIONS Inc., the phone subsidiary of Benpres Holdings Corp., is converting its parent company's advance subscriptions of P4.4 billion into equity, the telco's officials said on the sidelines of the Management Association of the Philippines CEO Conference.

"The advances are deposits for future subscription," Bayan CFO Meldin Al Roy said. "About P4.4 billion in advances were booked. This was even before the company entered into rehabilitation. These deposits will now be converted into capital stock."

"The conversion may be completed by yearend," Roy said. "We are now preparing the papers for submission to the the SEC (Securities and Exchange Commission)."

Bayan is also targeting higher sales for the year because of its wireless landline service.

Chief executive consultant Tunde Fafunwa said Bayan was preparing to spend about P10 billion over a five-year period, mostly to put up infrastructure to cope with increasing demand for the service.

The P10 billion is in addition to the P2 billion in capital expenditure for 2007. Of this budget, about P1.5 billion has been spent, mostly for building wireless landline base stations.

"The company may spend P2 billion or more a year for the next five years as demand grows," he said.

Fafunwa said funding for the next three years would come from internally generated funds. The company is still in the process of wiping out its $325-million debt by 2023, enabling it to exit its 19-year rehabilitation plan since September of 2004.

The company pays about P120 million to creditors every quarter, Roy said. Bayan's target was to pay off P2.39 billion in interest and principal by the end of 2007. As of September 2007, it has paid P380 million in principal and P1.75 billion in interest.

In the first half, Bayan posted 12-percent growth on the back of surging data and voice revenues. Bayan posted a net income of P800 million in the first six months, a turnaround from its net loss of P1.19 billion in the same period a year earlier.

Fafunwa also said the company was on track to beating its revenue and net income last year, but the rate of increase would depend on the strength of the peso.

Bayan wants to enlist 100,000 wireless landline subscribers by year's end. So far, it has signed up about 70,000.

Bayan's wireless landline is available in Marikina, Pasay, Caloocan, Manila, Davao City, Iloilo, Cagayan de Oro, Naga, Legaspi, Tacloban, Butuan and General Santos.

Fafunwa said it would take P25 billion and two to three years of infrastructure rollout to cover the entire country.

BAYAN Telecommunication chief executive consultant Tunde Fafunwa [L], Ambassador Albert Del Rosario and Evelyn Singson, chair of the Management Association of the Philippines CEO Conference Committee, at the 6th MAP International CEO Conference at the Makati Shangrila, Makati City. RUDY ESPERAS

Galoc oil to be exported to Korea, Dubai

By Abigail L. Ho

GALOC PRODUCTION Co. (GPC), the consortium operating Service Contract 14C in offshore Palawan, is looking at exporting the oil to be produced from the petroleum block by March next year to Korea or Dubai.

In a briefing yesterday, GPC country manager Kay Palma said that based on the group's initial test of the area's oil reserves, the oil that could be produced from the field was of the light sweet variety—unsuitable for the country's existing refineries.

The country has only two remaining oil refiners: Petron Corp. and Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. Petron's facilities are configured to refine Saudi Arabian crude, while those of Shell are designed to refine Iranian crude.

Palma said that since oil from the Galoc field was not of the same quality as those that existing refineries could refine, Galoc oil would have to be sold outside the country, most likely to Korea and Dubai.

GPC expects to get some 10 million barrels of oil from the Galoc field over the next several years, with first oil to be drawn by March next year.

FPHC borrowing $220M to raise Meralco stake

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

FIRST PHILIPPINE HOLDINGS CORP. (FPHC) of the Lopez Group plans to raise $220 million through a syndicated loan to fund its proposed acquisition of an additional 15.6 percent in sister firm Manila Electric Co. (Meralco).

At the sidelines of a Management Association of the Philippines international CEO forum, FPHC president Elpidio L. Ibañez said half of the loan would be denominated in dollars and the other half in the local currency.

It has tapped Banco de Oro to lead banks that will arrange the loan. Ibañez said the funding may be secured by the end of the month.

FPHC has a 17.7-percent stake in Meralco.

FPHC earlier disclosed that it wanted to buy the 6.6 percent in Meralco held by the Meralco Pension Fund, and the 9 percent owned by Union Fenosa.

If it completes the purchase of the two stakes, this will increase FPHC's total holdings in Meralco to more than 33 percent.

FPHC is also seeking shareholder approval next week to raise fresh funds from a proposed preferred share offer to prepare for the government's planned sale of its 29-percent stake in Meralco.

Ibañez said FPHC plans to raise P20 billion from the issuance of 200 million preferred shares at P100 each.

Preferred shares carry dividends at fixed rates which must be paid before any dividends are paid to common shareholders. However, these are nonvoting shares.

FPHC is the holding company for the Lopez family's interests in power generation, distribution and infrastructure businesses.

Stocks ...

From page B1

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas will meet tomorrow to decide on interest rates, with some economists betting policymakers will slash key interest rates by 25 basis points given tame inflation and the Federal Reserve's aggressive half-point rate cut last month.

"We may expect a 'sell on news' after the central bank's meeting, but the strength of regional markets and Wall Street, if sustained, will help bolster sentiment," De Leon said.

"Hints that the third-quarter gross domestic product might surprise with better-than-expected numbers again are also keeping the buying momentum intact," said Francisco Liboro of PCCI Securities.

"The market is (also) betting the US Fed may cut another 25 basis points off its key interest rates," Eagle Equities Inc. president Joseph Roxas said.

The US Federal Reserve earlier slashed key interest rates by a surprise 50 basis points in its September meeting, signaling it was ready to shield financial markets from volatility caused by a worsening subprime housing mortgage crisis. *With a report from AFP*

CURRENCIES

October 2, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.702741	1.000000	44.8630
Japan	Yen	0.006074	0.008643	0.3878
United Kingdom	Pound	1.435418	2.042600	91.6372
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.090450	0.128710	5.7743
Switzerland	Franc	0.601610	0.856091	38.4068
Canada	Dollar	0.708908	1.008776	45.2567
Singapore	Dollar	0.475532	0.676682	30.3580
Australia	Dollar	0.626776	0.891902	40.0134
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.864973	2.653857	119.0600
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.188049	0.267594	12.0051
Brunei	Dollar	0.473928	0.674400	30.2556
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000077	0.000110	0.0049
Thailand	Baht	0.022099	0.031447	1.4108
UAE	Dirham	0.191399	0.272361	12.2189
EU	Euro	1.000000	1.423000	63.8400
Korea	Won	0.000770	0.001095	0.0491
China	Yuan**	0.093514	0.133071	5.9700
Denmark	Kroner	0.134149	0.190894	8.5641
India	Rupee	0.017697	0.025183	1.1298
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.207115	0.294724	13.2222
New Zealand	Dollar	0.537675	0.765111	34.3252
Sweden	Kroner	0.109038	0.155161	6.9610
Syria	Pound	0.013739	0.019550	0.8771
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.021582	0.030711	1.3778

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY time—Oct. 1, 2007

* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen. ** Asian time closing rate as of Oct. 1, 2007

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of October 2, 2007)

52-WKS HIGH	52-WKS LOW	STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
		BANKS					
17.5	5.5	Asiatrust Development Bank Inc.	8.9	9.1	8.9	9	53,000
73	39	Banco de Oro-EPCI Inc.	61	62.5	61	61.5	2,569,900
73.5	53	Bank of the Philippine Islands	67.5	68	67	67.5	3,191,200
748	504	China Banking Corp.	705	710	705	705	4,580
23.5	18.5	Citystate Savings Bank	23.25	23.25	23.25	23.25	300
0.63	0.36	Export and Industry Bank Inc.	0.43	0.45	0.43	0.43	3,090,000
75.5	40	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Company	57	58	57	57.5	10,357,800
65.5	33	Philippine National Bank	49	50	49	50	246,100
39.57	15	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	27	29	27	27.5	3,962,300
90	49.5	Security Bank Corp.	79	79	77	78.5	33,600
66	43.52	Union Bank of the Philippines	55	55	54.5	55	603,600
		OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
5.6	1.76	ATR KimEng Financial Corp.	3.95	4	3.95	4	91,000
2.22	0.6	Bankard Inc.	1.98	2	1.94	1.96	4,174,000
16.25	3.7	CitisecOnline.com Inc.	12.25	12.5	12	12.25	1,125,700
1.6	0.4	First Abacus Financial Holdings Corp.	0.87	0.87	0.87	0.87	190,000
1,810.00	1,560.00	Manulife Financial Corp.	1,810.00	1,810.00	1,810.00	1,810.00	150
5	2.95	Nat'l Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	3.75	3.75	3.65	3.7	33,819,000
3.1	1.02	PCI Leasing and Finance Inc.	1.98	2	1.98	2	554,000
1,005.00	232	The Philippine Stock Exchange Inc.	780	780	770	780	4,890
2,350.00	1,945.00	Sun Life Financial Inc.	2,350.00	2,350.00	2,350.00	2,350.00	760
1.94	1.3	iVantage Corp.	1.58	1.6	1.58	1.58	1,314,000
		ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
6.2	3.8	Aboitiz Power Corp.	5.3	5.7	5.3	5.6	14,714,000
0.57	0.23	East Asia Power Resources Corp.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	1,470,000
70.5	49	First Gen Corp.	67	70.5	67	68	780,000
92	50	First Phil. Holdings Corp.	80	81	80	80.5	435,800
16	8.8	Manila Water Company Inc.	15.75	16	15.5	15.75	7,325,200
105.45	17.27	Manila Electric Company	84.5	87	84.5	86.5	1,739,800
7	4.1	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	6.7	6.8	6.6	6.7	15,631,000
6.5	3.9	Petron Corp.	5.9	6.1	5.9	6	5,756,000
14.75	6.6	Phoenix Petroleum Philippines Inc.	7.7	8	7.5	7.5	868,000
2.5	1.7	Salcon Power Corp.	2.12	2.12	2.1	2.1	36,000
1.9	0.99	Trans-Asia Oil & Energy Dev't Corp.	1.3	1.34	1.3	1.3	925,000
		FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
6.3	3.2	Alaska Milk Corp.	5.3	5.5	5.1	5.1	885,000
2.95	1.66	Alliance Tuna International Inc.	1.76	1.78	1.76	1.78	394,000
28.5	19.5	Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	25	26.5	25	26.5	62,900
61	34	Jollibee Foods Corp.	53	54	52	52	1,843,200
0.98	0.43	RFM Corp.	0.83	0.83	0.82	0.82	410,000
3.85	2.06	Roxas Holdings	2.48	2.48	2.48	2.48	55,000
80	59	San Miguel Corp. A	63	65	62.5	62.5	95,200
88	59.5	San Miguel Corp. B	65.5	67	65.5	66	343,700
22	15.25	Universal Robina Corp.	16.5	16.5	16	16	6,622,600
0.55	0.26	Vitarich Corp.	0.39	0.39	0.37	0.38	510,000
		CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
6.1	1.83	EEI Corp.	4.7	4.75	4.6	4.6	1,296,000
9.2	4.9	Holcim Philippines Inc.	8.4	8.4	8.4	8.4	1,470,000
7	1.44	Republic Cement Corp.	4.05	4.05	4.05	4.05	69,000
2	0.28	Southeast Asia Cement Holdings Inc.	1.32	1.34	1.28	1.28	22,219,000
		CHEMICALS					
6.3	3.75	Chemrez Technologies Inc.	4.25	4.35	4.2	4.2	2,752,000
1.46	0.51	Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1.02	1.02	1	1	201,000
		DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
0.75	0.125	Picop Resources Inc.	0.43	0.43	0.4	0.41	17,240,000
		HOLDING FIRMS					
3.9	2.06	A. Soriano Corp.	3.3	3.4	3.3	3.4	437,000
0.17	0.025	AJO.net Holdings Inc.	0.105	0.115	0.105	0.11	115,410,000
1.28	0.22	APC Group Inc.	0.89	0.89	0.85	0.85	8,780,000
3.6	1.5	ATN Holdings Inc. A	3	3	2.95	2.95	163,000
3.7	1.5	ATN Holdings Inc. B	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	100,000
0.018	0.007	Abacus Cons. Res. & Hold'gs Inc. A	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	35,400,000
0.019	0.0075	Abacus Cons. Res. & Hold'gs Inc. B	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	10,000,000
9.7	5.1	Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc.	7.2	7.4	7.2	7.3	2,281,000
0.021	0.0075	Alcorn Gold Resources Corp.	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	110,700,000
7.3	3.5	Alliance Global Group Inc.	5.7	5.8	5.5	5.8	27,506,000
1.38	0.52	Alsons Cons. Resources Inc.	0.94	0.94	0.94	0.94	100,000
2.9	0.89	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.	2.38	2.44	2.36	2.4	2,106,000
16	4.5	Atok-Big Wedge Company Inc. A	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	1,000
595	375	Ayala Corp.	565	595	565	580	1,216,000
15.25	7.22	Bacnotan Cons. Industries Inc.	13.5	13.5	13.5	13.5	2,000
5.8	1.22	Benpres Holdings Corp.	4.4	4.55	4.35	4.35	22,012,000
10.25	3.75	DMCI Holdings Inc.	9.4	9.4	8.9	8.9	553,000
6.9	1.08	Eton Properties Philippines Inc.	4.25	4.25	4.1	4.2	123,000
2.5	0.7	F and J Prince Holdings Corp. A	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	25,000
8	2.55	Filinvest Development Corp.	6	6.2	6	6.2	3,126,000
3.55	1.26	House of Investments Inc.	2	2.02	2	2.02	912,000
14.5	6	JG Summit Holdings Inc.	11	11.25	11	11.25	683,000
5.9	0.61	Jolliville Holdings Corp.	1.86	1.92	1.86	1.88	262,000
0.8	0.205	MEDCO Holdings Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	10,000
0.95	0.195	Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.56	0.68	0.56	0.62	390,000
11.5	1.1	Multitech Investments Corp.	6.6	6.8	6	6.1	9,408,000
8.2	2.8	PAL Holdings Inc.	7.3	7.8	7.3	7.8	4,854,000
0.215	0.01	Pacifica Inc. A	0.195	0.195	0.185	0.19	272,230,000
1.54	0.72	Prime Media Holdings Inc.	0.79	0.8	0.79	0.8	290,000
0.75	0.18	Prime Orion Philippines Inc.	0.51	0.52	0.5	0.5	4,080,000
2.1	1.2	Republic Glass Holdings Corp.	1.66	1.66	1.66	1.66	50,000
452.5	237.84	SM Investments Corp.	375	382.5	375	380	323,110
0.73	0.125	Sinophil Corp.	0.43	0.45	0.43	0.43	15,150,000
1.06	0.6	Solid Group Inc.	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73	390,000
1.6	0.9	South China Resources Inc.	1.46	1.46	1.42	1.44	231,000
23	1	TKC Steel Corp.	18.25	18.5	18.25	18.5	4,100
0.75	0.1	Wellex Industries Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.38	0.38	18,120,000
1.1	0.26	Zeus Holdings Inc.	0.75	0.78	0.65	0.7	300,000
		PROPERTY					
2.34	0.96	A Brown Company Inc.	1.5	1.5	1.48	1.48	175,000
8.9	5	Anchor Land Holdings Inc.	8	8	7.7	7.8	77,000
1.06	0.32	Araneta Properties Inc.	0.77	0.84	0.77	0.79	1,780,000
19.25	11.25	Ayala Land Inc.	16.75	17.25	16.75	16.75	8,882,900
1.88	1	Belle Corp.	1.28	1.28	1.22	1.22	5,528,000
4.7	2.65	Cebu Holdings Inc.	4.3	4.45	4.3	4.45	4,263,000
2	1.22	Cebu Property Venture & Dev't Corp.A	1.86	1.86	1.86	1.86	30,000
2.1	1.6	Cebu Property Venture & Dev't Corp.B	1.88	1.88	1.88	1.88	30,000
2.9	1.3	Cityland Development Corp.	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	43,000
0.86	0.31	Crown Equities Inc.	0.65	0.67	0.65	0.66	2,760,000
0.83	0.24	Cyber Bay Corp.	0.54	0.55	0.51	0.53	9,480,000
0.99	0.52	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.79	0.8	0.77	0.77	33,520,000
0.47	0.05	Ever Gotesco Res. and Hold'gs Inc.	0.28	0.29	0.26	0.26	11,010,000
1.48	0.61	Fil-Estate Land Inc.	1.36	1.36	1.28	1.3	39,270,000
2.44	1.26	Filinvest Land Inc.	1.84	1.88	1.82	1.82	72,132,000
0.49	0.1	Gotesco Land Inc. A	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	30,000
0.5	0.1	Gotesco Land Inc. B	0.3	0.36	0.3	0.36	180,000
3.3	2.16	Highlands Prime Inc.	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	200,000
2.9	0.95	Keppel Philippines Properties Inc.	2.04	2.04	2.04	2.04	1,000
1.12	0.24	MRC Allied Industries Inc.	0.63	0.63	0.6	0.6	5,070,000
4.4	1.73	Megaworld Corp.	3.9	3.95	3.85	3.9	70,835,000
6.4	1.5	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.	4.3	4.35	4.2	4.25	427,000
0.7	0.125	Phil. Estates Corp.	0.39	0.4	0.39	0.39	580,000
0.87	0.32	Phil. Realty and Holdings Corp.	0.56	0.56	0.53	0.54	12,660,000
23	12.5	Robinson Land Corp.	17.75	18.25	17.75	18	21,574,700
5.9	1.52	SM Development Corp.	4.5	4.65	4.5	4.55	1,813,000
13.5	6.64	SM Prime Holdings Inc.	12	12.25	12	12	12,990,200
3.25	1.02	Shang Properties Inc.	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	446,000
1.34	0.46	Suntrust Home Developers Inc.	0.72	0.72	0.67	0.67	5,730,000
0.49	0.08	Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.28	0.28	2,380,000
7.5	3.65	Vista Land and Lifescapes Inc.	5.1	5.2	5	5	20,952,000
		MEDIA					
38.5	16.25	ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	32.5	32.5	32.5	32.5	104,300
11.75	8.7	GMA Network Inc.	9.4	9.6	9.4	9.5	1,567,000
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
2.12	1.1	Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	1.42	1.44	1.4	1.42	4,990,000
1,535.00	1,055.00	Globe Telecom Inc.	1,485.00	1,535.00	1,485.00	1,520.00	119,990
2,970.00	2,150.00	Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co.	2,950.00	2,970.00	2,940.00	2,940.00	106,530
7.9	4.5	Pilipino Telephone Corp.	7.2	7.2	7	7.2	3,563,000
		INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
0.39	0.17	Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.2	0.2	11,540,000
12	2	Diversified Financial Network Inc.	9.5	9.8	9.5	9.8	45,000
11.5	2	IPVG Corp.	9	9.2	8.7	9.2	5,023,000
0.065	0.027	ISM Communications Corp.	0.045	0.047	0.042	0.045	678,800,000
2.9	1.48	Ionics Inc.	1.78	1.78	1.78	1.78	21,000
0.32	0.043	Island Info and Technology Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.185	0.185	37,300,000
2.08	1.1	Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.28	1.28	1.26	1.28	351,000
0.0725	0.029	PhilWeb.Com Inc.	0.0525	0.055	0.05	0.055	1,051,000,000
5.8	1	Transpacific Broadband Grp Int'l. Inc.	2.6	2.75	2.55	2.55	1,557,000
		TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
2.14	1.14	Aboitiz Transport System Corp.	1.42	1.46	1.4	1.4	492,000
6.8	3.5	Asian Terminals Inc.	4	4	3.8	3.9	233,000
38.5	16.5	Int'l Container Terminal Services Inc.	37	37	35.5	37	346,500
2.16	0.93	Keppel Philippines Marine Inc.	2.04	2.1	2.04	2.1	500,000
2.04	1.04	Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	6,000
		HOTEL & LEISURE					
4.25	1.8	Leisure and Resorts World Corp.	3.2	3.4	3.05	3.05	511,000
6	2.16	Manila Jockey Club Inc.	4.6	4.7	4.6	4.7	150,000
4.55	2.8	Philippine Racing Club Inc.	3.45	3.45	3.45	3.45	10,000
0.98	0.3	Premiere Entertainment Prod'n Inc.	0.71	0.71	0.67	0.67	5,100,000
1.2	0.42	Waterfront Philippines Inc.	0.84	0.84	0.81	0.81	140,000
		EDUCATION					
9.8	7.2	Centro Escolar University	8	8	8	8	2,000
3.7	2.6	iPeople Inc.	3	3	3	3	330,000
		DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
6	1.94	Macroasia Corp.	4.7	4.75	4.7	4.7	345,000
17.25	9.8	Pacific Online Systems Corp.	13	13	12.5	12.75	363,300
30	10.75	Paxys Inc.	13.25	14	13	13	2,687,200
		MINING					
0.017	0.0085	Abra Mining and Industrial Corp.	0.012	0.013	0.012	0.013	305,300,000
7.6	3.6	Apex Mining Company Inc. A	6.1	6.1	5.9	5.9	753,000
7.7	3.85	Apex Mining Company Inc. B	6	6	6	6	241,000
21.25	7.7	Atlas Cons. Mining and Dev't Corp.	16.5	16.5	16	16.25	3,226,100
14.25	8.9	Benguet Corp. A	12.25	12.25	12.25	12.25	13,500
5	1.8	Dizon Copper Silver Mines Inc.	3.3	3.3	3.05	3.05	104,000
3.1	0.51	GEOGRACE Resources Philippines Inc.	2.65	2.75	2.5	2.55	126,857,000
0.37	0.18	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. A	0.37	0.37	0.34	0.35	34,650,000
0.42	0.22	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. B	0.39	0.4	0.37	0.38	10,620,000
0.038	0.017	Manila Mining Corp. A	0.029	0.029	0.028	0.028	416,100,000
0.041	0.02	Manila Mining Corp. B	0.031	0.031	0.031	0.031	32,800,000
30	1.2	NiHAO Minerals Res. Int'l Inc.	21	21.25	17.75	18.5	7,069,000
0.021	0.0079	Omico Corp.	0.013	0.014	0.013	0.014	242,100,000
8.5	3.45	Philex Mining Corp.	8.2	8.5	8.2	8.3	30,037,000
43	14.75	Semirara Mining Corp.	35.5	35.5	35	35	33,000
1.36	0.39	United Paragon Mining Corp.	1.06	1.08	1.02	1.02	2,679,000
1.8	0.56	Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp.	1.32	1.34	1.3	1.3	1,950,000
		OIL					
0.58	0.25	Basic Energy Corp.	0.37	0.37	0.36	0.36	15,350,000
0.027	0.0095	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. A	0.025	0.027	0.025	0.026	990,600,000
0.029	0.01	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. B	0.026	0.029	0.026	0.028	384,200,000
11.75	9	Petroenergy Resources Corp.	9.6	10.25	9.6	10.25	155,000
0.029	0.0089	The Philodrill Corp.	0.026	0.029	0.026	0.028	1,333,600,000

AVERAGES				VOLUME	VALUE
Financial	914.96	UP	6.44	26,925,620	850,762,765.00
Industrial	4,647.70	UP	74.96	91,513,800	610,335,320.00
Holding Firms	2,038.65	UP	5.61	516,855,150	340,442,285.00
Property	1,649.79	UP	37.08	317,501,000	973,716,990.00
Service	1,741.03	UP	0.54	517,722,700	586,975,875.00
Mining & Oil	7,581.94	UP	209.84	1,710,578,100	674,456,210.00
All Shares Index	2,244.17	UP	17.46		
PSEi	3,597.92	UP	25.02		
		GRAND TOTALS		3,181,096,370	4,036,689,445.00

COMPILED BY SCHATZI QUODALA, INQUIRER RESEARCH

SOURCE: TECHNISTOCK, PSE

Rice sector seen growing 5.74% in 2008 despite dry spell, typhoons

By Amy R. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE expects the rice sector to grow by 5.74 percent next year despite the lingering effects of the prolonged dry spell and typhoons.

The department is banking on production programs to make up for the shortfall this year, which should carry over to next year.

Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap earlier estimated that the sector would grow by 3 percent this year.

According to Ginintuang Masaganang Ani Rice Program executive director Frisco Malabanan, growth drivers next year include the restoration of irrigation systems, expansion of genetic material and provisions for post harvest facilities.

He added that the additional harvest of some 300,000 to 350,000 metric tons from the quick turnaround planting program this year may compensate for the losses incurred from the dry spell.

A total of 99,217 hectares has been planted to palay since the QTA program started on Aug. 1, exceeding the target of 88,174 hectares.

This buoyed hopes that the country will meet its target production this year of 16.23 million metric tons.

The DA said it was confident that rice supply would be enough for the whole year, given the additional harvests from the QTA areas and the current buffer stock in the warehouses of the National Food Authority.

According to data from the GMA Rice Program, Region 12 led the QTA planting with 33,858 hectares; followed by Region 10 with 13,604 hectares; and Region 6 with 12,043 hectares.

The QTA scheme uses early-maturing seeds in fully irrigated areas to recoup lost rice output due to the drought.

Earlier, Malabanan said the DA targets to raise palay production to as much as 19 million metric tons by 2010.

Jobs at Subic up 11%

Locators expanding operations, SBMA says

By Ronnel W. Domingo

EXPANSION PROJECTS OF SUBIC LOCATORS jacked up the number of jobs in the free port by 10.9 percent to 70,408 as of end-August, according to the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority.

SBMA data show that the increase from last year was felt as locator companies began expansion projects. The entry of new firms into the free port also increased jobs.

In the eight-month period, the manufacturing sector accounted for 16,264 new hires while the services sector and construction sector opened up 13,495 and 5,892 new jobs, respectively.

The SBMA labor report also showed that of the total workers, two-thirds or 47,638 were males working in companies engaged in services and construction.

Female workers, meanwhile, number 22,770, more than half of whom are also employed in the services sector.

Further, SBMA said females working for manufacturing firms outnumber their male counterparts at 10,270 to 7,045.

Olongapo City remains the biggest source of workers in the Subic free port zone, accounting for two of three employees.

Other workers come from Zambales (one of five); Bataan (14 percent); Metro Manila (6 percent); and Pampanga (3 percent).

There are 700 companies operating in the Subic Bay free port, of which the top 10 employer-firms account for about 34 percent of the workforce here.

These include shipbuilder Hanjin Heavy Industries & Construction Corp., with total direct hires of 4,946; construction firm KC Tech, 4,289; computer maker Wistron Infocomm, 3,257; electronics producer Nidec Philippines, 2,485; and manpower contractor Powerlane Resources, 2,231.

Also on top of the list are electronics firm Sanyo Denki, 1,141; manpower service provider Jeannies Touch, 1,688; manpower contractor Nozomi Fortune Services, 1,157; Limech Garment Manufacturing Co., with 926; and courier services giant Federal Express, with 910 workers.

Last June, SBMA announced Hanjin had committed to pour an additional $684 million in its $1-billion shipyard in Subic.

Hanjin's expansion plans are expected to open up more than 13,000 direct jobs by next year and 15,800 by 2011.

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BPI/MS Insurance Corporation
Synopsis of Annual Statement
As of December 31, 2005

ADMITTED ASSETS	
Bonds	P 1,541,341,551.29
Stocks	331,925,727.26
Real Estate	116,094,828.80
Mortgage Loans	34,722,165.43
Other Loans	7,124,281.29
Security Fund	20,789.00
Other Investments	15,600,175.87
Cash on Hand and in Banks	335,940,166.83
Premium Receivable	238,892,921.88
Premiums Due From Ceding Companies	39,106,640.01
Reinsurance Recoverable on Losses	462,969,707.93
Loss Reserve Withheld by Ceding Companies	5,430,563.66
Other Reinsurance Accounts Receivable	747,011.52
Accrued Investment Income	46,352,433.28
Electronic Data Processing Machine	52,398,891.78
TOTAL ADMITTED ASSETS	P 3,228,667,855.83
LIABILITIES	
Losses and Claims Payable	P 661,947,084.74
Reserve for Unearned Premiums	326,613,944.46
Catastrophe Loss Reserve	41,574,852.96
Premium Due to Reinsurers	416,809,391.03
Premium Reserve Withheld for Reinsurers	130,990,565.28
Accounts Payable	98,618,116.50
Accrued Expenses	14,124,602.21
Taxes Payable	149,440,945.00
Other Liabilities	38,960,768.65
Total Liabilities	P 1,879,080,270.83
STOCKHOLDERS' EQUITY	
Capital Stock Paid-up	P 304,923,300.00
Excess of Subscribed Capital Stock	325,971,744.17
Contributed Surplus	100,000,000.00
Retained Earnings	618,692,540.83
Total Stockholders' Equity	P 1,349,587,585.00
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND STOCKHOLDERS' EQUITY	P 3,228,667,855.83

(This Synopsis is prepared from the 2005 Annual Statement, approved by the Insurance Commissioner is published pursuant to Section 225 of the Insurance Code of 1978, as amended.)

SSS: Still deep in the woods

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM is awash with P17.3 billion in cash. Banco de Oro paid this whopping sum for the SSS shareholdings at the Equitable-PCI Bank. My column of Sept. 19 drew the background behind the sale.

The millions of SSS members should heave a deep sigh of relief. Yet, there is little reason for jubilation. Admittedly, the P17.3 billion fills a big hole in the financial statement. But, as the 2004 annual report clearly shows, there are other gaping holes. SSS is still deep in the woods.

First, in 1999, SSS lent P395 million to Waterfront Philippines against the first mortgage over parcels of land and the assignment of 200 million shares. Waterfront defaulted. In 2004, the court issued a writ of preliminary attachment.

Second, also in 1999, then SSS CEO Carlos Arellano swore in an affidavit that, on direct orders by President Estrada, SSS bought shares of Belle Resources. The total acquisition cost was P1.078 billion. As of 2006, the shares were worth P476.145 million, resulting in a loss of P602.192 million.

Third, real estate properties booked at over P12.8 billion "include … properties consisting of condominium units, parking spaces (!), commercial and memorial lots which were exchanged with shares of stock. It also includes prime lots acquired in settlement of commercial/industrial loans."

But these losses pale when compared with the losses in investments in low-cost housing and in small loans (salary, tuition, calamity loans).

Early in his administration, President Fidel Ramos embarked on a flagship project of building 1.2 million low-cost housing units all over the country. To raise the P200 billion needed for his grandiose plan, Ramos ordered SSS, GSIS and Pag-IBIG to pitch in. SSS lent P40 billion to the National Home Mortgage Finance for relending to low-cost homeowners. Four years into the program, the flagship was in total shambles. Laden with hopelessly uncollectible loans, NHMFC has gone bankrupt, not once, not twice, but three times. SSS is left holding an empty bag.

To promote membership during its early years, SSS opened the small loans window. After being a member for only six months, a member could borrow against his salary to pay for his child's tuition. Or, after a typhoon, he could take out a calamity loan. Today, the small loans total over P30 billion. Over 80 percent are hopelessly overdue. Many of the borrowers cannot be located anymore. What is worse, when the borrowers retire, they will have no pensions to retire on.

When I go over the SSS annual financial report, I have to keep reminding myself that, not being an accountant, when an investment goes down in value, the loss is considered merely a paper loss and is not recognized in the books as a loss. This accounting rule has been affirmed by the Supreme Court. So, SSS carries billions in assets which are nothing but cotton candy--that is, very little sugar, but mostly air.

Let me say at this stage that the mess at the SSS has been festering long before the appointments of Chair Thelmo Cunanan and president and CEO Corazon de la Pàz. Their tasks have been truly Herculean. (Next week: What to do with SSS.)

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
JOB Market
YOUR CONNECTION TO
+BETTER PEOPLE,
BETTER JOBS

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AND IT HAS.
The HP ProLiant DL580 G5 Server.
The most reliable foundation for your ERP.

Powered by the Quad-Core Intel® Xeon® Processor, the HP ProLiant DL580 G5 Server has been ranked the best server platform for SAP solutions.* It makes your ERP system effective, productive and change ready. With its open integration and application platform, information is better consolidated and processes streamlined. Add to this a host of features like the hotplug SAS drives, fans and PCI slots, and you have a system that is easy to install, reassuringly dependable and secure. So contact an HP representative today, because when it comes to reliability, you can always count on HP.

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*Based on SAP two tier SD benchmark results (SAPS), obtained from www.sap.com for the x86 4 socket category as of September 2007
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Filipina lone Asian speaker in Mideast PR confab

EDITH B. SOLA, APR, THE CEO OF World Communications (Philippines) Inc (WorldComPhil) has been chosen as the lone Asian speaker to join more than 40 leading industry experts in this October's International PR Congress in the Middle East. Other speakers include Alastair Campbell, communications adviser to then Prime Minister Tony Blaire, and Colleen Harris MVO, former Press Secretary to HRH The Prince of Wales.

SOLA

Sola's extensive background in PR and communications management has not only maintained her competitive edge among the country's PR practitioners, it has also gained her wide acclaim in the international PR scene. With more than 20 years of experience in PR and Integrated Marketing Communications under her belt, Sola's dynamic presence is considered a staple in both local and international conferences. Prior to the upcoming Middle East convention, she was also selected as lone speaker from the Asia Pacific Region to the International Public Relations Association and the Public Relations Society of America Congress in Chicago in 2002.

In 1993, Sola partnered with global PR giant Worldcom PR Group Inc where she consequently served as regional chair of the Asia Pacific for three terms. Sola has also been consistently active in the Public Relations Society of the Philippines where she was elected director for 3 terms, chaired the Professional Development Committee and the most coveted, Anvil Awards. She has also served as executive director of the World Young Business Achievers Award, an international award body that recognized successful young leaders in business and entrepreneurship.

Edith Sola concurrently acts as the senior consultant of the World Communications Gulf, LLC in Dubai.

Masskara at the Powerplant Mall

FEEL THE NEGROS BEAT AT MASSKARA SA Makati! on Oct. 6 at the Rockwell Tent grounds beside Powerplant Mall. The fun begins at 6 p.m. with the La Carlota Drumbeaters. Party until midnight with the Wicked Tarsiers Band and DJ Mike Collantes playing the sounds of the '80s. Special guests include the cast of upcoming indie film "Beerhouse" starring Joel Torre, Ronnie Lazaro, Epy Quizon, Ryan Eigenmann and Gwen Garci. The event is co-presented by the Association of Negros Producers, San Miguel Corp, and La Salle Bacolod Alumni of Metro Manila.

GE Money Bank refits branches

GE MONEY BANK HAS COMPLETED A REfit of its 15 branches following its launch last year. Starting with its branch in Ayala, Makati, half of GE Money Bank's branches in the country in and outside Metro Manila are now designed to give customers wider areas to conduct their business. Among them are the GE Money Bank branches in Salcedo, Ortigas, Greenhills, Del Monte and Caloocan for Metro Manila, as well as provincial branches located in San Pablo, Lipa, Batangas, Cagayan de Oro, Davao, Cebu Business Park, Plaridel, Lapu-lapu, and Bacolod. GE Money Bank opened with 30 branches nationwide.

Designed by Binswanger Philippines, the new set-up greatly changes the environment of the branch by making it look warmer and very customer-friendly with the GE Money's brand color and logo. Further, the 30-percent increase in client space makes the branch more open and inviting to its customers. The refitted layout offers more space for customers and departs from the traditional bank layout.

Deposits grown by 200%

"The changes made in the bank helped the branch in growing our business. Since we have more customers who are happy with their banking experience with us, we have grown our deposit level by over 200 percent since the refit," said Francis Reyes, GE Money Bank Ayala branch manager. The refit has also positively affected employee morale as the new environment is very conducive to working effectively and cultivating good customer relations.

Doris Gonzales, GE Money Bank head for branches further says, "We have received very positive feedback from our customers with regard to the refit. They find the new look to be unique and very conducive to conducting banking transactions." Coupled with the personalized service that the Bank is known for, the new branch premises enhance the customer's banking experience.

The branch refit is part of GE Money Bank's strategy to provide its customers with a simply better banking experience. It is an initiative that aims to address customers' needs of accessibility, efficiency and convenience.

With its modern look and simple lines, the newly-refitted branches are able to simplify banking processes and provide personalized service to its customers.

For more information on GE Money Bank, visit any of its branches or call 721-8000, or log on to www.gemoneybank.com.ph.

Living up to the word 'tawad' in shopping

ETYMOLOGICALLY SPEAKING, the word "tawad" or "paghingi ng tawad", due to the inherent linguistic creativity of the Filipino, was transformed from being a plea of forgiveness to a request for a substantial discount. It was to become an utterance that reverberates throughout the country and became a customary act.

So how do Filipinos make *tawad*? It's basically more like a game of pure wits, cunning, and strategy. When they see a potentially good product they want to buy, they start by asking for a hefty discount, which ranges from around 40-sometimes up to an unbelievable 50-percent *tawad*, coupled with a poker face, with the hope of the seller finally giving in.

If they sense stiff resistance, the next strategy would be to walk away, giving the impression of looking for another store to look for the same product, and also hoping that the seller settles for a compromise. True enough, the seller yields just to seal the deal, especially if it's a *buena mano* for the day. More often than not, the customer gets what he wants—both product and large discount.

Thus, stretching the value of the peso through *tawad* or *pagtawad* became a common trait among Filipinos regardless of social and financial stature, especially in a hawker's paradise like Divisoria. And it being historic Divisoria, Tutuban Mall is no exception.

However, the difference when shopping at Tutuban Mall—the "bargain capital of the Philippines"—is that, more importantly, the prevailing philosophy at the mall is to ensure that shoppers should get value for their money through quality products, whether the buyer made *tawad* or not.

Living up to their name as bargain capital? There is no doubt about Tutuban Mall's viewpoint when it comes to giving due importance to the Filipino shopper. And this is an area where Tutuban Mall offers absolutely no compromise. Tutuban Mall is absolutely the right place of "True Pinoy Shopping Experience".

Figaro Coffee around the country

COFFEE IS NOW A LIFESTYLE product and coffee shops like Figaro would do well to stay close to where the coffee farms are, around the country. Figaro now sources its beans directly from coffee farmers in the 22 coffee-growing provinces from Benguet to Sultan Kudarat.

Three years ago, Figaro started spreading the aroma of its coffee blends beyond Metro Manila, starting with the Sta. Rosa outlet in June of 2004, then Tagaytay, followed closely by Baguio in early 2005. Soon after, a franchised outlet was opened by Cindy Yap in the Chimes Mall in the business district of Davao in September 2005.

Figaro is poised to open in SM Bacolod, while plans continue for a few more outlets in Cebu headed by SM Expansion Area to be operated by Diana Yap, a cousin of the Davao franchisee.

More provincial branches are within the development radar of Figaro's management in the next 2 quarters. Log on to www.figarocoffee.com to view the various locations of Figaro. With a Figaro outlet near you, you are always assured of your cup of great-tasting coffee, within easy reach.

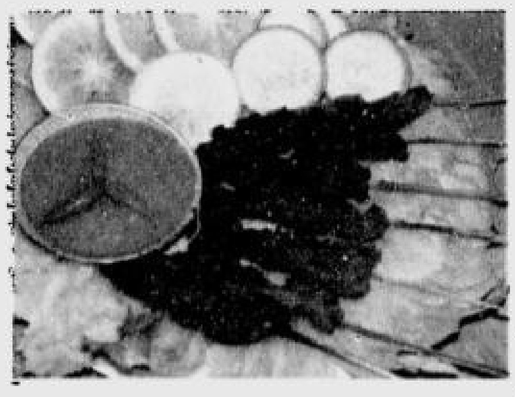
Pork-less cuisine for Ramadan

IN OBSERVANCE OF THE MUSlim holy month of Ramadan, the Satti Grill House is offering more non-pork delicacies for Manila-based Muslims-and non-Muslims alike-to feast upon in their day-long fast that ends at 5 p.m. daily.

Satti Grill House, the first food outlet to serve exotic food from Zamboanga City and Sulu at the SM-Fairview Food Court, has beefed up its menu by introducing the Malaysian Chicken Sate with Peanut Sauce, the Indonesian Beef Satay with Hot Mango Dip, the Malaysian Beef Curry and other food from Southeast Asia to give Muslims more halal food choices as they break their daily fast that starts at 6 a.m.

But the main attraction of the Satti Grill House remains the spicy Satti, the local version of the Sate and Satay that is the rave in Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore.

Satti, which is made of peanut-based soup, is served with grilled beef or chicken. What makes the "Satti experience" unique is the fact that the rice served is cooked in coconut leaves and is dipped in the Satti soup when eaten.



Call or visit the Satti Grill House at FS 16-B Ground Floor, SM Fairview Food Court, Quirino Highway, Quezon City (932-3609/430-0282/0917-5208013).

Xändo™
Block Burn
Watsons

XANDO RENEWS PARTNERSHIP WITH WATSONS

Perfectaire Inc, the local distributor of Xando Block and Burn in the Philippines, recently renewed its partnership with Watsons personal store chain. The fastest-selling dietary supplement in the country today, Xando Block Burn is exclusively available at all Watsons outlets. Now on its 2nd year with the personal store chain, Perfectaire Inc president Wilfred Chua expressed his satisfaction over Watsons all-out support for their product. 'Watsons caters to our target market and so we owe our success to them. Because of their tremendous support, there was an immense market patronage for Xando.' Watsons senior merchandising comptroller Stanley Perez was likewise honored to be part of the meaningful event. He emphasized that Perfectaire's renewal of their partnership is an indication of their undying trust in their outlets. 'We are deeply honored to be the sole distributor of a prestigious brand like Xando, which is recognized all over Asia.' Shown, from left: Perfectaire general manager Nina Lacap and president Wilfred Chua, Watsons senior merchandising comptroller Stanley Perez and senior category manager Aida Lapez.

Animal blessing at Bonifacio High Street

THE ANIMAL WELFARE COALITION, Hobbes & Landes, Texas Road House Grill and Krispy Kreme invites all animal lovers to an animal blessing on Oct 7, Sunday, 5 p.m., at the Bonifacio High Street, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig. The event celebrates World Animal Day (WAD).There will be treats, games and prizes for the pets and their humans. This event is in cooperation with Bonifacio High Street and the City of Taguig. Rev. Fr. Nolan Que will bless the animals. Be there rain or shine! For more information, call 867-4506 or log on to www.animalwelfare.com.ph.

G Audio's new home

One of the country's most trusted and popular names in In-Car-Entertainment (ICE) set ups and automotive detailing has relocated to a much better location. G Audio's new home is at Greenhills Garden Square Condominium, 297 Boni Serrano Avenue. "Our intent is to get closer and be more accessible to our client base," states Gerry Chua, the man behind award-winning show cars and the accredited ICE installer of the "Aftermarket Mafia".

The G Audio shop boasts of a much expansive floor space. A three-car garage can accommodate major ICE installation, repair and automotive detailing at the same time. "G Audio is an accredited dealer of major in-car audio-video systems such as Sony, JL Audio, Momo, JVC, Alpine, Polk Audio, Hyfonics and Adam's automotive detailing," says Chua. A display rack inside the climate-controlled showroom allows patrons to view different audio-video products and suggested set ups. "This would allow clients to decide on what kind of set up they prefer and our trained staff can show them the different features of their desired brand," adds Chua.

For details on how to improve your ICE, get in touch with G Audio at 705-3210 or log on to www.g-audioph.com.

Motul and Subaru: A winning combination

SUBARU RALLY DRIVER CODY CROCKER recently secured his second consecutive Asia-Pacific Rally Championship after finishing fifth in the Rally Indonesia. Crocker, with co-driver Ben Atkinson, had a tough race in the heat and rugged roads of Indonesia, but the pair battled on to grab the necessary points to win the championship.

A crucial ingredient to Crocker's campaign in winning the Asia Pacific Rallye Championship (APRC) is Motul's 300V Double Ester Motor Oil. Aside from powering the Subaru APRC team, Motul is the oil and lubricant of choice of the Subaru World Rallye Team competing in the World Rallye Championship (WRC).

Motul 300V is made up of Double Ester technology which significantly improves engine output performance by carefully balancing the ratio of complex esters with the newly developed macromolecular high polymer ester developed by Motul. By maintaining high film strength, the 300V series is able to withstand long-term shearing loads and sustain the oil's advanced lubricating properties even on the highest of temperatures.

The 300V series was designed to perform in engine areas which are subjected to extreme conditions that often exceed the "safe zone" where traditional lubricants fall short. This performance of the 300V translates to consistent oil pressure, better engine response and lower oil temperature for improved engine performance, higher horsepower output and complete engine durability. It is literally like a smart oil tailor-made to serve its purpose.

Motul's line of oil and lubricants range from the high performance 300V series, 100-percent synthetic motor oils for gas and diesel, ATF, DIII, power steering oils, limited slip differential oils, gear oils, coolants, brake fluids and a comprehensive maintenance line.

Motul is a certified, recommended and oil of choice of racing teams that compete in the Japan Super GT, World Rallye Championship (WRC), 24-Hour Le Mans, Asia-Pacific Rallye Championship (APRC) and the Moto GP. For details on how to improve your car's performance, call 726-0399 or visit the Motor Image Subaru Showroom along Edsa and Autoplus Sportzentrium at 233 Edsa, Mandaluyong City, or log on to www.motul.com.ph.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
Maynila, Pilipinas
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project / Brief Description	One (1) lot Supply, delivery, installation and commissioning of CCTV Systems for the following BSP Regional Offices/Branches, per BSP Terms of Reference, Technical Specifications, Scope of Work and Bill of Quantities: 1. La Union Regional Office 2. Cebu Regional Office 3. Davao Regional Office 4. Iloilo Branch 5. Bacolod Branch 6. Batac Branch 7. Dagupan Branch 8. Dumaguete Branch 9. Tacloban Branch 10. Kalibo Branch 11. Legazpi Branch 12. Cabanatuan Branch 13. Lucena Branch 14. Naga Branch
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	P140,663,850.00 (lot price)
Delivery Period	Within one hundred eighty (180) calendar days after receipt of the approved contract.

Prospective bidders should have undertaken at least three (3) but not more than five (5) similar requirements, awarded and completed from Y2002 to present, aggregating to at least 50% of the ABC, one of which costs at least 25% of the ABC. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. No. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	Starting 3 October 2007, up to 2:00 p.m. only
2. Pre-Bid Conference	26 October 2007, 10:30 a.m.
3. Opening of Bids	13 November 2007, 2:00 p.m.
4. Bid Evaluation	) These shall be in accordance with the prescribed periods allowed in the Implementing Rules & Regulations (IRR)-A of R.A. No. 9184 dated 10 January 2003.
5. Post-qualification	
6. Notice of Award	

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P50,000.00 to the BSP Cashier.

The BSP assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

The BSP reserves the right to reject any and all bid proposals, or declare the bidding a failure, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) **JUAN DE ZUÑIGA, JR.**
Chairman

(PDI–October 3, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS
Manila

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Sealed applications for eligibility and bid documents for the supply and delivery of 3,600,000 pcs. Paper Seal (CEF No. 12) for use in connection with the October 29, 2007 Barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan Elections, shall be received at the Comelec Session Hall, 8th floor, Palacio del Gobernador, Intramuros, Manila, October 10, 2007 at 10:00 in the morning, at which place, date and time, said sealed bids shall be opened in the presence of the members of the Bids and Awards Committee, representatives of the Commission on Elections, Commission on Audit, Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting, the participating bidders and the public, with an approved budget of Five Million Four Hundred Thousand Pesos (P 5,400,000.00) charged against the savings of the May 14, 2007 National and Local Elections.

A Pre-bid Conference shall be held on October 8, 2007 at 10:00 in the morning at the Comelec Session Hall, 8th Floor Palacio del Gobernador Building.

Bid documents and specifications may be obtained during regular office hours, beginning October 4, 2007 from the Property Division upon payment at the Cash Division, Commission on Elections, of a non-refundable amount of Two Thousand Seven Hundred Pesos (P2,700.00).

Bids shall be accompanied by a Bid Security equivalent to one per centum (1%) of the approved budget for the contract to be bid, in the form of cash or Manager's/Cashier's check payable to the "Commission on Elections".

Delivery shall be: 50% on or before October 15, 2007
50% on or before October 18, 2007

The COMELEC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any formal defect contained therein, and accept the lowest complying responsive bid that is most advantageous to the Commission. Likewise, it reserves the right to review the qualifications of the bidders after the bidding and before the contract is executed. Should such review uncover any change, in the situation of the bidder to materially downgrade the substance of such statements, the COMELEC shall disqualify the bidder upon due notice without any obligation whatsoever on the part of the COMELEC for any expense or loss that may be incurred by the bidder in the preparation of its bid.

October 3, 2007.

(Sgd.) **JOSE M. TOLENTINO, JR.**
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI--Oct. 3, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Transportation and Communications
LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE
Regional Office No. III
Maimpis, Govt. Center
City of San Fernando, Pampanga

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

Rehabilitation of LTO-Region III Motor Vehicle Inspection Station Renovation and Improvement of MVIS building

The LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE – REGION III, through the SSARO NO. LTO-151-12-2007-004 dated January 12, 2007 Fund 151-MVUC, intends to apply the sum of Nine Million Eight Hundred Two Thousand Four Hundred Two Pesos and 91/100 Only (P9,802,402 91) being the Approved Budget for Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the Renovation and Improvement of Motor Vehicle Inspection Station (MVIS) Building of LTO Region III. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

The LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE – REGION III now calls for the submission of Letters of Intent (LOIs) from potential Bidders to apply for eligibility for the Renovation and Improvement of MVIS Building Bidders should possess a valid PCAB license applicable to the above type and cost of the contract, have completed a similar contract with a value of at least fifty percent (50%) of the ABC, and meet the other minimum eligibility requirements stated in the Eligibility Documents. Interested Bidders must submit their LOIs on or before October 17, 2007, 5:00 pm, at the Conference Room, LTO-Region III, Government Center, Maimpis, City of San Fernando, Pampanga and secure the Eligibility Documents therefrom. Applications for eligibility will be evaluated on a "pass/fail" basis. The last day for the submission of the accomplished Eligibility Documents shall be on the date of the opening of Eligibility Documents: October 18, 2007, 5:00 p.m. at Conference Room, LTO-Region III, Government Center, Maimpis, City of San Fernando, Pampanga. Only those Bidders passing the eligibility check will be entitled to purchase the Bidding Documents.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted, unless otherwise stated, to organizations with at least seventy-five percent (75%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines. In accordance with the IRR-A of R.A. 9184, only Bids from eligible Bidders will be opened. In accordance with the IRR-A of R.A. 9184 a contract will only be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder who was determined as such during post-qualification.

Interested Bidders shall submit their accomplished Eligibility Documents to the BAC Secretariat at LTO-Region III, Government Center, Maimpis, City of San Fernando, Pampanga on or before October 18, 2007, 5:00 p.m.

Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE – REGION III and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on October 26 to 30, 2007.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Bidders that passed the eligibility check upon the presentation of the Notice of Eligibility to the BAC Secretariat, at the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of Ten Thousand Pesos Only (P10,000.00). The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the bidder or his authorized representative on or before October 30, 2007, 5:00 p.m.

The LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE – REGION III will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all Eligible Bidders on October 31, 2007, 2:00 p.m. at the Conference Room, LTO-Region III, Government Center, Maimpis, City of San Fernando, Pampanga.

Eligible Bidders must submit their Bids at the address below on or before November 12, 2007, 2:00 p.m. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in any of the following form:

Form of Security	Minimum Amount in % of Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid (ABC)
1.) Cash, certified check, cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit	One percent (1%)
2.) Bank guarantee	One and a half Percent (1 ½%)
3.) Surety Bond	Two and a half Percent (2 ½%)
4.) Foreign government guarantee	One hundred Percent (100%)

or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted. Bid opening shall be on November 12, 2007, 2:00 p.m. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below on November 12, 2007, 2:00 p.m.

Completion of the Works is required within one hundred eighty five (185) calendar days after the issuance of the Notice to Proceed.

The LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE – REGION III reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE-REGION III
Jesus Ma. Y. Vitug – Asst. Regional Director
Government Center, Maimpis, City of San Fernando, Pampanga
Tel. # (045) 961-2528
Fax # (045) 963-5661

(Sgd.) JESUS MA. Y. VITUG
BAC Chairman

(PDI–October 3, 2007)

NATIONAL
CLASSIFIEDS
The Widest Read Classifieds

More Classified Ads:

PSALM A10
Philippine Navy A10
National Food Authority A14
Marilou O. Adea A14
National Power Corporation A14
Hafele Phils. Inc. A14
Silvestre Neri A14
DOLE-Region IV A14
DOLE-NCR A16
Talahome Inc. A20

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ROLEX, AP
PANERAI, OMEGA
CARTIER, IWC
PATEK, BULGARI
SWISS WATCHES
GOLD & DIAMOND SPECIALISTS
sec ndo' Glorietta
☎ 894-0282 • 889-7956

Enjoy Our
ALL-DAY WAGYU SPECIAL!!!
ON October 8 - 12, 2007 (Mon - Fri)

NIHONBASHI-TEI
Izakaya & Steak House

Japan Wagyu Beef Rib Eye Steak (150g) Set Menu
(mixed veggies, soup and rice are included)
for ONLY P 800.00
HURRY!! LIMITED for FIRST 100 GUESTS ONLY

Try also our:
US Rib Eye Steak 150g Set Menu for P500.00
LIMITED for FIRST 300 GUESTS ONLY
HURRY!!
800 Arnaiz Avenue Makati City
Tel. no.: 818-8857/818-8807

We're open
2nd Floor Steak House
11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. & 6 p.m. to 11 p.m.
Ground Floor Izakaya
11a.m. to 3 p.m. & 5 p.m. to 2 a.m.

FOR IMMEDIATE HIRING

TOUR COORDINATORS

- Male/Female, 30-35 years of age
- College Graduate
- Fluent in Korean Language
- With at least 3 years of experience as tour coordinator
- With Marketing ability

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OBITUARIES

JOSE MARIA "BARRY" ABAD-SANTOS VALDES

Passed away on October 1, 2007.

Wife **Gigi**; children **Ian, Franco, Benjie, Ida** and life partner **Phoebe** say goodbye with love.

His remains are at **Pinaglabanan Church, San Juan.**

Interment will follow after the **5:00 p.m. Mass, Friday, October 5, 2007.**

Ernesto Trias Genuino

Ex-Mayor of Gen. Trias, Cavite
Peacefully joined our Lord on 29 September 2007
at the age of 86.

His loving wife **Puring** (†); children **Junior** and **Baby, Bebot** and **Daisy, Neda** and **Soc** (†), **Dodo** (†) and **Anna, Olive** (†) and **Ray**, and **Elinore**; together with grandchildren, brother, sisters, relatives and friends, request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the family residence at #159 Juan Luna St., Gen. Trias, Cavite.

Interment will be on October 6, 2007, Saturday, 2:00 pm at the Artemio Ricarte (Vibora) Cemetery after the 9:00 am necrological services at the General Trias Municipal Hall.

"I am the resurrection, and the life, He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies, and whoever believes in Me will never die."

EULALIA TANGCO LOPEZ

of Claveria, Cagayan

Peacefully joined our Lord Jesus Christ on October 1, 2007 at the age of 101.

She is the beloved wife of DELFIN SR. (†) and sadly missed but lovingly remembered by her children and spouses MARINA and NICANOR (AQUINO), LETICIA and JOVITO (CASTILLO), VIRGILIO and LOLITA (AQUINO), RUBEN and ERLINDA (ESPIRITU), JAIME and MAUREEN (TULLY), SALVADOR and CYNTHIA (ROSALES), NICANOR and EUNICE (CORDOVA), DELFIN JR. and MA. DOLORES (GARCIA), EULALIA and ENRIQUE (†) (ARRASTIA) and ISABEL JAVIER; grandchildren and great-grandchildren, relatives and friends.

Her remains lie in state at LOYOLA MEMORIAL CHAPELS at Dr. A. Santos Ave., Parañaque City.

Interment will take place on October 7, 2007 at Himlayang Pilipino Memorial Park, Tandang Sora, Quezon City, after the 8:00 A.M. Mass.

We ask for your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Atty. Angel "Lito" Tinio Domingo

Singalong, Manila and Guimba, Nueva Ecija
Ateneo de Manila High School Class 1956
U.P. College of Law Class 1963

Peacefully joined his Creator and wife **Agnes (Girlie) Flores** and parents **Francisco** and **Ala Tinio Domingo** on Sept. 30, 2007 at the age of 69.

His loving children, **Ma. Ala (Mia)** and **Marga**; brother **Benjamin**, in-laws, nephews, nieces and other relatives & friends requests pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Capilla de la Virgen, Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati.

Interment will be on Thursday Oct. 4, 2007 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina after the 9:00 A.M. Mass at the Santuario de San Antonio.

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NAME OF DECEASED	PLACE OF VIEWING	INTERMENT/CREMATION DATE & TIME	PLACE
ASUNCION C. CASASOLA	Superior	October 4, 2007 9:00 AM	Holy Cross Mem. Park
FELIPE PICAZO VALDEZ	Chapel - 12	October 4, 2007 8:00 AM	Himlayang Pilipino
ATTY. ELPIDIO J. MENDOZA	Chapel - A	October 3, 2007 12:30 PM	Holy Cross Mem. Park

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HSBC: OFW-fueled growth can't be sustained

Growth to come from BPO, mining, tourism, says analyst

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC GROWTH, as fueled by remittances from overseas Filipino workers, will likely last for five to ten more years given favorable global demographics, but a more solid industrial backbone has to be built to sustain growth of over 7 percent over the long haul.

According to visiting HSBC economist Frederic Neumann, the country should work harder to attract more investments, and harness tremendous potentials from three sectors—business process outsourcing, mining and tourism.

The country's gross domestic product (GDP)—a closely watched economic indicator, which sums up all goods and services produced by the domestic economy—grew by 7.3 percent in the first semester to hit its strongest in 20 years.

"Despite this tremendous economic achievement in the first half, to some degree, it's a bit of a mirage because it was fueled by a tremendous amount of remittances coming from abroad," Neumann said. "But over the long term, that model of economic development is not sustainable."

In the last few months, for instance, Neumann said growth in remittances from overseas Filipinos had slowed down. He said this could have a dampening impact on private consumption in the quarters ahead.

For this year, Neumann expects the country's growth to average at 6.5 percent, and then slow down to 5.5 percent by next year as it remained "vulnerable to shifts in remittance."

"We can't maintain an economic growth rate of 7 to 8 percent by just basically throwing money to the economy," he said. "I'm not saying it's not a real achievement, but what we know is we need investments to make it sustainable, and investment is what is sorely lacking."

Neumann said the banks' real lending growth remained anemic, suggesting sluggish investment appetite.

"There has been activity in the construction sector, but this is largely financed by cash [from] older OFWs bringing money to build homes for their retirement," he said.

But the analysts said favorable demographics would likely continue for the meantime. He is referring to the country's young population, contrasting it with the aging population in western countries—a condition that is seen to drive up demand for imported labor.

He added the country could also benefit from remittance dividends in the form of skills and earnings, brought home by returning workers, which could be invested locally. This is what is happening in India, which experienced the remittance phenomenon ahead of the Philippines.

Megaworld seals Iloilo airport deal

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

MEGAWORLD CORP. HAS FINALLY SIGNED a sale and purchase agreement with the government to buy the 54.5-hectare old Iloilo airport property in Mandurriao, Iloilo City for P1.2 billion in cash.

In a disclosure to the stock exchange, Megaworld said it would apply with the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (Peza) for a special economic zone license and turn the old airport lot into a business district.

The property firm expects the project to become a magnet for major business process outsourcing (BPO) companies interested in setting up shop in the Visayas region.

Also, Megaworld plans to build educational facilities geared toward providing value-added training to equip prospective employees with the necessary skills suited to the requirements of call centers and other BPO businesses that will be based in the proposed business district.

Iloilo is the center of commerce and education in Western Visayas. On the other hand, Megaworld is the pioneer developer of urban information technology or BPO parks in the country, starting with the Peza-accredited Eastwood City CyberPark in Quezon City.

Alliance Global Group Inc. has a 46-percent stake in Megaworld, and is the holding firm of property magnate Andrew Tan. The holding firm has a P32.8-billion war chest as of the end of the first half. Tan controls both AGGI and Megaworld.

The government's attempt to auction off the old Iloilo airport property sometime in the second quarter was declared a failure because all bid prices submitted were below the P1.2 billion floor price set by the Department of Finance.

SSS mulls over plan to invest ₱18.7B abroad

STATE PENSION FUND SOCIAL SECURITY System (SSS) is studying the possibility of investing roughly P18.7 billion of its assets abroad, similar to what the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) has done.

At the sidelines of yesterday's Management Association of the Philippines (MAP) international CEO forum, SSS president Corazon dela Paz said that, under its charter, the pension fund could invest 7.5 percent of its assets in foreign instruments.

Total assets of the SSS are estimated to reach P250 billion.

Dela Paz said the pension fund is currently receiving proposals from "interested parties" who wish to act as financial adviser for the undertaking.

"This still has to go through the commission," Dela Paz said. "We can make a decision by the first semester next year."

Dela Paz said the SSS has yet to decide on the mix of investments. The pension fund is considering both equities and fixed income instruments.

In the first half of the year, the SSS made P15.58 billion in investment income and collected P29.94 billion in members' contributions.

The investment income surged from P6 billion in the same period last year, following the recent sale of SSS shares in blue chips like San Miguel Corp. and Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT).

The SSS sold its shares equivalent to a board seat in San Miguel for P13.22 billion, and generated another P2 billion from the sale of some PLDT shares.

Earlier, the Government Service Insurance System announced plans to invest $1 billion of its assets in the international investment market to boost its income-generating ability. *Elizabeth Sanchez –Lacson*

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Parks conservation marks Isuzu's 10th year in RP

By Charles E. Buban

WHILE CARMAKERS are still in the process of developing the greenest and most efficient vehicle, a number of them are already doing what is perhaps the best option—plant more trees.

And these carmakers are on the right track. Planting trees have many positive impacts on the environment including the absorption of odors and pollutant gases (nitrogen oxides, ammonia, sulfur dioxide and ozone) and filter particulates out of the air (by trapping them on their leaves and bark) that vehicles emit.

Scientists blame the more recent rise in average global temperatures at least in part on the accumulation of carbon dioxide, methane and other heat-trapping greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, which are by-products of automobiles, power plants and other fossil fuel burners.

To make the situation much worse, scientists also lamented the destruction of trees through burning, which releases about 5 percent of greenhouse gases every year.

Give something back

"Planting trees can offset climate change in part because they absorb carbon dioxide. This is the reason every year as we celebrate our inaugural anniversary, we have pledged to do an activity that would give something back to the environment," informed Isuzu Philippines Corp. president Keiji Takeda.

In 2002, IPC held an environmental show for the children of Biñan and Sta. Rosa in Laguna and donated tilapia fingerlings and river garbage trap to Laguna Lake the following year. In 2004, the company donated a two-classroom building to Biñan National High School and in 2005 created a man-made forest strip in Quezon province.

Last year, IPC went to Pangasinan to lead the planting of mangroves.

10th year

As IPC marks its 10th anniversary, Takeda announced that the company launched a nationwide park conservation campaign for the greening of premier parks in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao.

Dubbed as the Isuzu Park Conservation Campaign '07, the first leg was held at the Rizal Park last August with Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim, Department of Tourism Assistant Secretary Cynthia Carrion and National Parks Development Committee executive director Carlito Fajardo in attendance.

Aside from the plants donated, IPC also gave Rizal Park Vicinity Maps with environmental messages and waste recepta-

PARKS/ B2-2

CEBU Mayor Tommy Osmeña (standing) leads the actual planting. He is joined by IPC's Balmadrid (far left) and Takeda as well as Cebu First Lady Margot Osmeña and Cebu Vice Mayor Mike Rama.

IPC marks its 10 anniversary by spearheading a parks conservation campaign starting with the Rizal Park in Manila.

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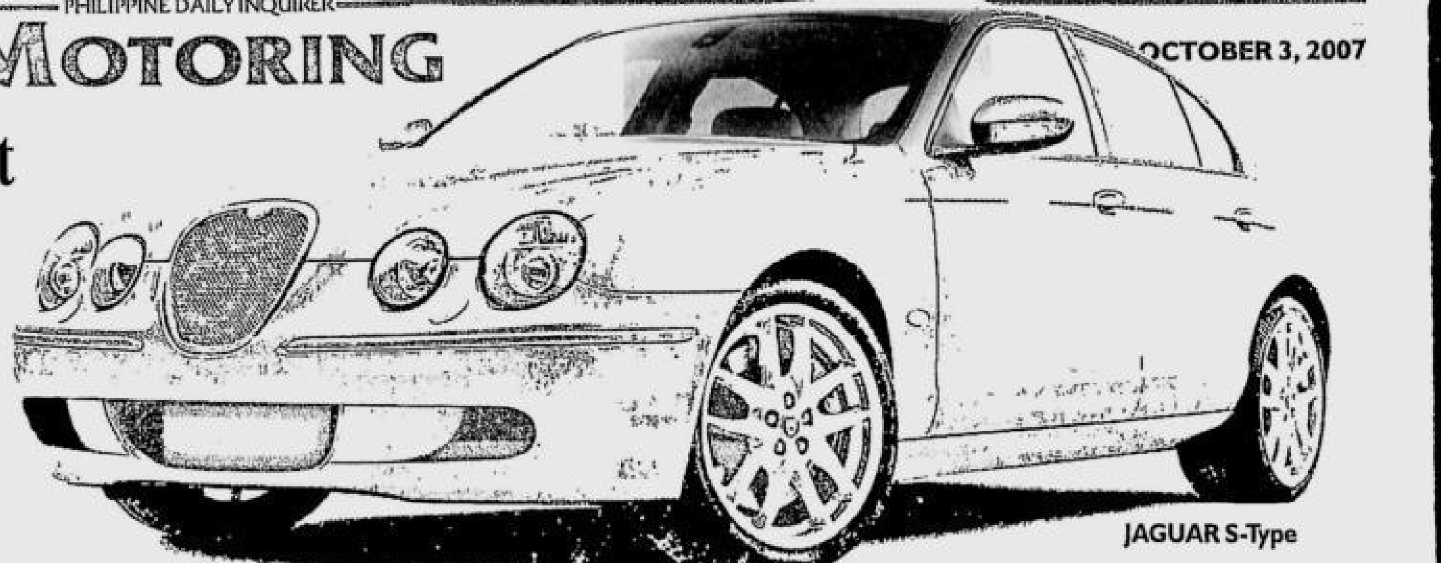


JAGUAR S-Type

MY DRIFT

Andre Palma

FIRST OFF, LET ME SAY THAT I'M NOT a luxury car guy. Those of you who've gotten to know me over the last few years of this column have probably figured out that one already. Almost to a fault, the value of a vehicle is solely anchored in the way it drives. Cars that don't perform well are just written off as fluff and I have to admit that some brands do come across as just all soft and downy.

Jaguars have always held me inquisitive as to what they are all about. Not merely a luxury brand, one cannot ignore this English marquee's performance and motor sport heritage. Any company with a storied endurance sports car racing history at Le Mans and the guts to step into the Formula One bull ring must know what it's doing, right? The brand's perceived veneer of luxury and flash may actually be built on something substantial after all.

Introduction to Jaguar

After years of waiting, I've finally gotten substantial seat time in one of these cars from Coventry. A spanking new S-Type would be my introduction to Jaguar and what the brand has to offer. How would a car that's been soldiering on in worldwide showrooms since 1999 fare against a driving palate spoilt by the sharpest showcases of technology and performance from the rest of the performance luxury purveyors?

First of all, the cockpit of the S-Type throws you off. Not purely performance oriented, there are some obvious concessions to comfort and, for the lack of a better word, luxury. There are probably fewer cars in the market cloaked in more leather and covered in as much wood but there is something strangely enthralling about the execution of it all. It should be tacky but it isn't. This may be my first wood trimmed interior experience that passes muster.

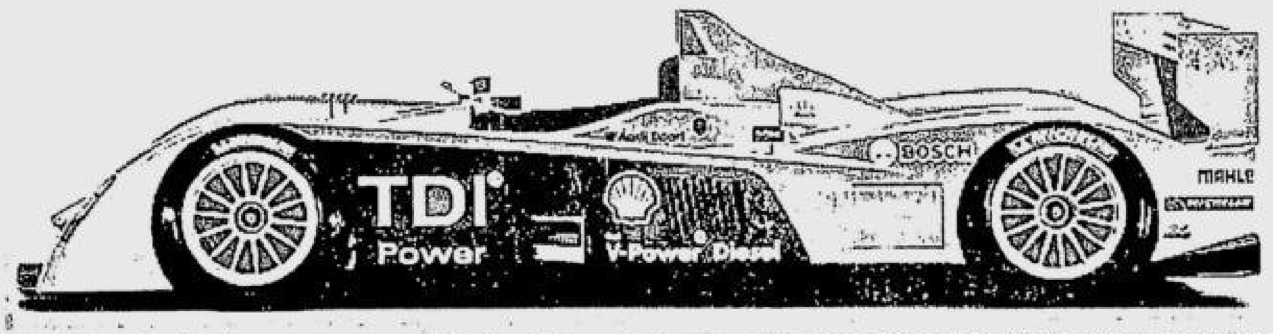
Driving around the streets of Manila, as probably with most other urban locales in the world, the S-Type is an attention black hole. It is as if light is drawn to the car by the gravity of its exterior design, the drama of the car's shapes and shadows. This is a car that asks to be stared at but there is a good reason for all the fuss. It is beautiful.

Performance comes by way of a 3.0-liter V6 that literally purrs while delivering 240 horses and 300 Nm of torque. Punch is sufficient and propels the one and three quarters ton mass very well. There is no gimmickry in the six-speed automatic transmission; no paddles, no push button shifters, just a well geared unit that gives this car enough leverage both for highway speed and shuffling about in traffic.

Ride characteristics

Putting the S-Type through its paces, the suspension makes an argument for both performance and comfort. As a driver, a stiffer, more progressively sprung setup with better rebound would be ideal. Trouble is that Jaguars are often as much about those who are driven around as those who are at the wheel. Between the expectations of these two critical groups, the ride characteristics of the Jaguar are split almost equally. The result, truthfully, is a car whose handling is neither here nor there, too vague for on the limit driving, too bumpy and fussy for those who prefer to sit in the back.

All in all, the experience of driving the S-Type was satisfying. Many questions were answered, some preconceived notions were quelled. While there are sharper and more cutting-edge luxury performance cars in the Philippine market today, this particular Jaguar will still hold its niche in the market. We find a car with a lingering performance heritage hidden under coachwork that is a textbook study in automotive esthetics. But after all is said and done, I'm still not a luxury car guy.



BOSCH, racing development partner of Audi and Peugeot, developed the Piezo Diesel Injector, chalking up the first-ever victory for diesel in the 24-hour LeMans.

The past's 'futuristic' vehicles coming alive now with Bosch

SINCE THE INTRODUCTION OF motion pictures, film producers have romanticized the concept of the flying car—from space oddities and popular sci-fi flicks of the 1960s—to the time-traveling DeLorean of "Back to the Future." And as the movie-going public the world over marveled at the sensational flying automobile, director Robert Zemeckis even included an on-board device called "Mr. Fusion" in the BTTF sequel, which converts solid waste into spontaneous energy for the flying DeLorean.

A glimpse into the future? Perhaps then it was. But as more and more ideas are spawned by bespectacled Hollywood writers, we come to realize that now is the depicted future in those motion pictures. The modern-day automobile may not be as clean and efficient as say—George Jetson's flight pod—but then again, George never got the sheer thrill of cornering with Traction Control.

To out-'green' Mr. Fusion

Back on the ground, the automobile is still arguably the most exhilarating creation of the 20th century, and to which German technology has contributed—in great part—its precision and continuous innovation for safer mobility, now producing cars that run on alternative fuels; and perhaps some day, even spontaneous combustion.

Modern innovations have seen the development of the F-Cell Mercedes A-Class, which is powered by compressed hydrogen, and the BMW Hydrogen 7, which is based on the Bavarian manufacturer's 12-cylinder luxury sedan.

But long before economizing a single tank of fuel, and even before trying to make it from point A to point B in a motorized wagon, one had to first figure out how to "start" (or ignite) the internal combustion engine, developed in 1886 by pioneers Gottlieb Daimler and Wilhelm Maybach who adapted the contraption on a stagecoach—the world's first four-wheeled automobile.

That same year, fellow German inventor Robert Bosch invented the magneto—a device that electrically "ignites" the engine; instead of physically "cranking" the vehicle from the outside—thus, paving the way for the birth of modern-day comfort electronics for automobiles.

From start to finish

At the turn of the century, Bosch went further to produce the first sparkplug, which up to now, remains the company's flagship product that has been produced over 10 billion times. Also since then, combustion has been the core business of the Bosch organization.

The euphoria of motorized transport was embraced by the world. But not to rest on their laurels, German ingenuity went back to the drawing board to explore even greater possibilities, setting standards in safety and efficiency that would be the global benchmark for fine automobiles.

Bosch registered a patent for the Antilock Braking System (ABS) as early as 1936 and commercially introduced the product in the 1970s, providing drivers complete control over steering while braking to avoid obstacles on the road. Today, approximately 75 percent of the world's cars are equipped with ABS, preventing quite a significant number of collisions and accidents in the process.

Following the ABS, and the introduction of the Traction Control System (TCS) in the 1980s, Bosch developed the Electronic Stability Program (ESP) in the 1990s, which consists of the functions of ABS and TCS and also works to prevent the vehicle from skidding. When ESP detects that the vehicle is about to skid, it instantly reduces the engine output and specifically brakes single or several wheels; therefore, keeping the vehicle on course.

As of late, the US National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has passed a provision mandating all passenger cars in the US must be gradually equipped with the ESP by Year 2012.

Bosch has further established the reputation of German technology by introducing the first common-rail diesel injectors that provide cleaner and more efficient combustion to a car's fuel, 10 years ago today. Since then, Bosch has produced more than 33 million common-rail systems. The company also developed the Piezo—high-pressure injectors that brought the first-ever victory for a diesel-powered car in the history of LeMans.

Innovating for the future

German cars hail from a long, proud tradition of automotive excellence. Several outstanding marquees have emerged through the years. Mercedes Benz from Stuttgart, BMW from Bavaria, Audi from Ingolstadt, Porsche from Baden-Württemberg, and Volkswagen from Wolfsburg are among those that have caught many aficionados' fancy and whose innovative vision surpass that of the future.

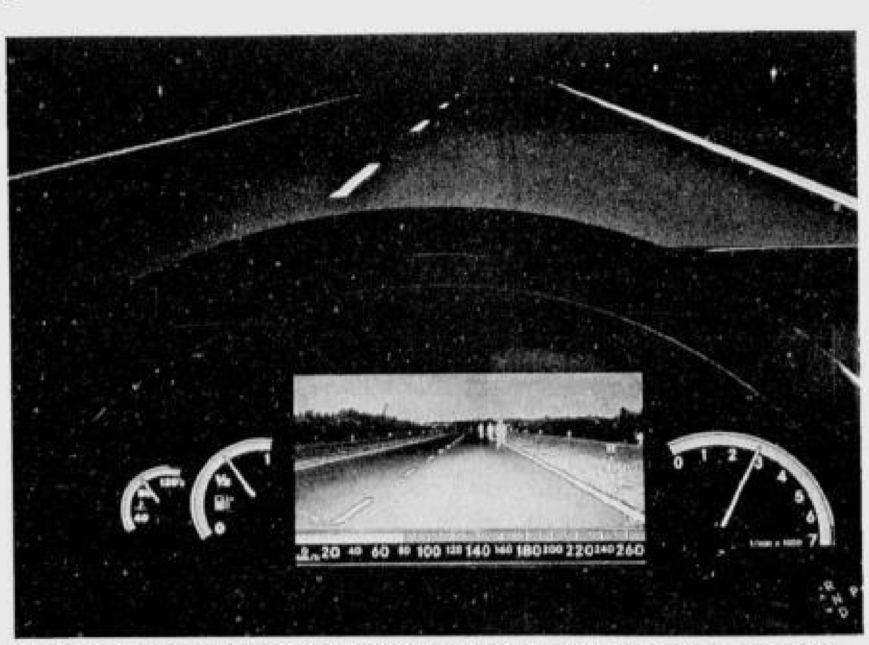
In a scene from "Be Cool in 2005," Chili Palmer (played by John Travolta) was scoffed by a sports car owner for driving around in a hybrid. "If you're important, people will wait for you," says Palmer. Great perspective; however, fuel-efficiency and clean emissions need not be sluggish.

Innovative concepts like the Bosch Clean Diesel components reduce fuel consumption by 30 percent (against gasoline) and 25 percent less CO_2 emissions while its downsizing concept reduces the engine's displacement but produces more power through turbocharging.

Other developments include Night Vision, an on-board monitor that allows drivers to see clearly at night; Start-Stop System, which automatically controls fuel consumption during city traffic; and the Automatic Park Assistant, which…(simply explained)…automatically parks cars.

Sounds futuristic? On the contrary, these current trends are rapidly moving toward that direction. And just when the age of technology has raised the comfort level of today's motorists, these innovations aspire to fulfill a future need even before they are conceived.

And finally, to raise an argument whether the DeLorean (will it fly again in "Back to the Future 4"?) or The Jetson's flying car is more efficient—Dr. Emmet Brown fuels the DeLorean with scraps, while George Jetson…well, no one has ever really caught him gassing up. Hanna-Barbera cartoons must have made a subtle precedent to cold fusion. But that's another story.



NIGHT vision is an on-board monitor that allows drivers to see farther than the car's headlights.

Motorists get more value in Seaoil's LangiSulit

WITH THE HIGH COST OF FUEL AND maintenance, owning a motor vehicle is getting harder each day.

This is why Seaoil Philippines, the country's homegrown oil company, is launching a campaign to help car owners get more value from their money.

Dubbed LangiSulit, a combination of "langis" (oil) and "sulit" (great value), the campaign will give discounts to motorists who buy Seaoil's various lubricants.

Ease financial burden

Seaoil president Glenn Yu said the campaign aims to ease the financial burden of car owners.

"By giving them discounts, our customers can have more purchasing power," he said.

"Seaoil customers know good products and know a great deal when they see one and for them, Seaoil's fuels and lubricants give better value for their hard-earned cash."

Pioneering efforts

Seaoil has been repeatedly cited by the Department of Energy for its pioneering efforts in promoting clean-burning fuels at lower prices.

Its G5 Extreme gasoline, for instance, carries a higher octane rating than most premium gasoline brands yet is being sold at regular gasoline prices.

Seaoil's lubricants—Geo Extreme for gasoline and Deomax for diesel engines—are also substantially cheaper than similar products of other companies.

"With the LangiSulit campaign, we are enabling our customers to have more savings," Yu noted.

To avail of LangiSulit discounts, simply go to any of the 114 Seaoil outlets all over the country. For more information, log on to www.seaoil.com.ph.

Toyota offers 2005 Innova rear axle special service campaign

IN LINE WITH ITS COMMITMENT TO customer satisfaction, product quality and safety, Toyota is pleased to announce its special service campaign for identified Innova year model 2005, which were produced between February and December 2005.

The company, during tests, has identified a batch of rear axles, which may not meet its durability standards. While no failures have occurred in the market, purely as a precaution, Toyota will replace the rear axles with brand-new and improved parts, free-of-charge.

Engineer Vitaliano Mamawal, vice president for Customer Service Operations, said, "Toyota believes in providing our valued customers with vehicles of outstanding quality, safety and value. We are also committed to give your cars the best maintenance services for a pleasurable and trouble-free driving experience. We wish to thank our Innova customers who have already availed of our special service campaign and we would like to invite our other remaining customers for a service appointment at their nearest authorized dealers."

For any inquiries, please call Toyota's Customer Service Assistance Center at 819-2912 or your dealer's service department.

Parks conservation . . .

From page B2-1

cles in line with the government's waste segregation program.

Enhance the beauty

IPC vice president for corporate business Arthur Balmadrid explained during the turnover the importance of these donations. He said these will not only further enhance the beauty of Rizal Park but also make the visitors' stay here more enjoyable.

Continuing its nationwide park conservation campaign, IPC headed last month to Cebu for the second leg of the campaign.

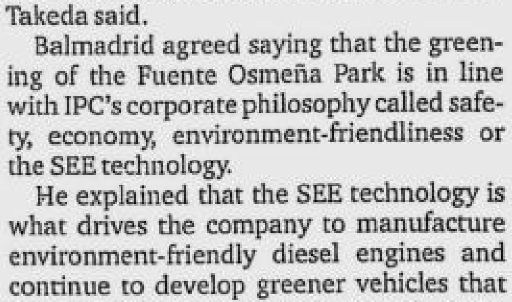
To help the city save on the cost of replanting after every fiesta, IPC turned over at the Fuente Osmeña Park ornamental plants and planter pots to Cebu Mayor Tommy Osmeña. Vice Mayor Mike Rama and Cebu Parks and Playgrounds Foundation head Rosario Aboitiz attended the event.

Environmental markers were also donated to the park with the message to remind visitors of the park's history and their part in keeping it clean.

"The company recognizes Fuente Osmeña Park's relevance as a major gathering site for Cebuanos. As we paid homage to Dr. Jose Rizal at the Luneta Park in Manila, this time, we are paying tribute to Cebu's own, President Sergio Osmeña Sr. This park was even immortalized in the P50 bill," Takeda said.

Vital role

He said Cebu has played a vital role in contributing to our overall market share and in making our vehicles the people's choice.



IPC executives and Manila City officials sets 10 doves free to symbolize the company's 10th anniversary.

"We would thus like to thank the Cebuanos, especially those who have patronized our vehicles—the Alterra, the D-Max, the Crosswind, the Isuzu trucks and buses," Takeda said.

Balmadrid agreed saying that the greening of the Fuente Osmeña Park is in line with IPC's corporate philosophy called safety, economy, environment-friendliness or the SEE technology.

He explained that the SEE technology is what drives the company to manufacture environment-friendly diesel engines and continue to develop greener vehicles that have the least possible impact on the environment and the health of the people.

For the final leg of the Park Conservation Campaign '07, Isuzu heads to Davao City this month.

Goodyear launches 'Bayani ng Kalsada' sticker campaign

GOODYEAR PHILIPPINES INC. RECENTLY kicked off the "Bayani ng Kalsada" sticker campaign, an important road safety project that reminds motorists to become not only more responsible drivers but also heroes in their own way.

Launched at the Goodyear Hi-Performance Center in Las Piñas, the sticker campaign was also conducted at Plaza Moriones in Manila, AP Reyes and Caltex Buendia in Makati and Macro Tires in Cebu City. This activity seeks to further promote Bayani ng Kalsada, an annual nationwide search that aims to promote stories of courage and extraordinary service while paying tribute to the unsung heroes on the road.

Honor exceptional deeds

"Creating greater awareness on this program will serve as an opportunity to honor more exceptional deeds of drivers who are worthy of being called Bayani ng Kalsada, as well as pave the way for more orderly and safer roads. We at Goodyear would like to promote our corporate value of safety, whether road and driver safety, environmental safety, or workplace safety," Goodyear president and managing director Dave Morin said.

All drivers are invited to participate in the sticker campaign, which will be held in various areas in Metro Manila and provinces until November this year. Included in the scheduled venues are Mike Autopart in Davao (Oct. 5), Caltex Quirino (Oct. 12), Goodyear Pampanga (Oct. 26) and Goodyear Quezon Avenue (Nov. 16).

Nationwide program

Bayani ng Kalsada is a nationwide program developed by Goodyear to locate, honor and publicize those drivers who clearly qualify to be proclaimed "heroes." Now on its second year, the search is open to anyone, including transport associations and car clubs, who wish to nominate a "Tsuper Pinoy," representing drivers of public utility vehicles, trucks and private cars.

Nomination forms are available at Goodyear Servitek dealers and TyrePro outlets nationwide, various Land Transportation Office (LTO) branches, Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board offices, selected Caltex stations, as well as at the offices of Filtrepreneur Franchise and Centro Negosyo.

Entries may be submitted at Goodyear Servitek dealers and TyrePro outlets nationwide, or via mail at P.O. Box 7260, Domestic Airport, Manila or P.O. Box 1384 M.C.P.O., Makati City. Forms may also be sent via fax at the Goodyear office (876-4596) or at the secretariat (893-7049), or via e-mail at www.goodyear.com.ph/bayani. You may also nominate through SMS—text BNK to register and send to 2299. Deadline of submission of entries is on Dec. 31.

Categories, prizes

The contest has four categories: public utility jeepney drivers, taxi/FX drivers, commercial truck/bus drivers and private drivers. Each winner will receive P30,000 cash prize, P500,000 worth of personal accident insurance, P25,000 worth of gas coupons, P20,000 worth of SM Home Appliance, food cart with P500 worth of products, P10,000 worth of training certificate, Revicon Forte gift pack, plaque, as well as a Bayani ng Kalsada special jacket, cap and shirt.

In addition to LTO, LTFRB and DOTC, the campaign is also supported by SM Appliance Center, Caltex Philippines, Standard Insurance, Filtrepreneur Franchise Inc., Centro Negosyo Inc., Revicon Forte, Manila Bulletin, Abante, Pilipino Star Ngayon, dzBB and LS FM.

Driving tips for the rainy days

HAVE YOU EVER EXPERIENCED losing control of your vehicle while driving during a rainy day and the roads are wet? During the rainy season, a lot of accidents should have been avoided. What are the different things to remember when driving during a rainy day?

First, because the roads are wet, ease off the accelerator and slow down gradually. When the vehicle's speed is too fast, this will decrease your ability to react quickly and to use the brakes when there are slow vehicles in front.

Use your headlights and hazard warning lights when visibility is seriously reduced so that other motorists will easily see your vehicle. Leave a bigger gap or safe following distance between your vehicle and the vehicle in front on wet roads. If the two-second gap is the safe rule on dry roads carrying fast traffic, the gap should be at 4 seconds during a rainy day. Avoid tailgating especially if visibility is poor due to heavy rains.

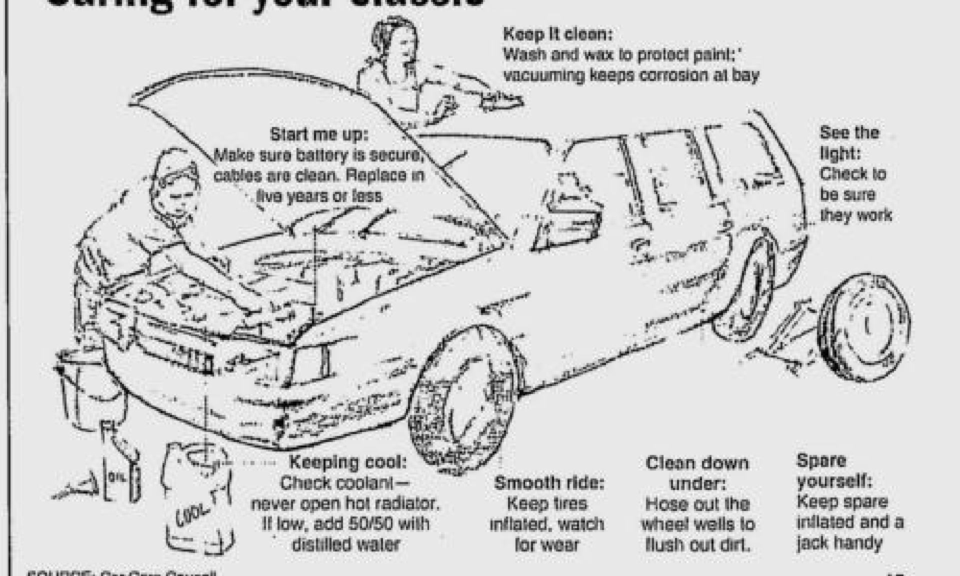
Wet roads dangerous

Slowing down on wet roads will allow you to take control of your vehicle. Wet roads are dangerous especially when there is a series of curves. A cruising speed on wet roads will prevent your tires from gripping the road and maintain the "centripetal force" that allows your vehicle to stay on the curves. The rain and spray from other vehicles will make it difficult to see vehicles in front.

Second, regularly maintain your vehicle especially your windshield's wiper blades, brakes and tires. Make sure your wipers are working. Change your worn-out tires and regularly examine the tread of the tires, checking if it is thick enough to withstand wet roads.

All these tips can be found in the first-ever handy reference publications for motorists that help improve their driving habits published by Tollways Management Corp., the operator of the North Luzon Expressway.

Caring for your classic


Keep it clean:
Wash and wax to protect paint; vacuuming keeps corrosion at bay
Start me up:
Make sure battery is secure, cables are clean. Replace in five years or less
See the light:
Check to be sure they work
OIL
COOL
Keeping cool:
Check coolant—never open hot radiator. If low, add 50/50 with distilled water
Smooth ride:
Keep tires inflated, watch for wear
Clean down under:
Hose out the wheel wells to flush out dirt.
Spare yourself:
Keep spare inflated and a jack handy

SOURCE: Car Care Council

AP

Car care chart

Regular maintenance can add years of use.

Service: months / miles	3/3,000	6/6,000	9 /9,000	12/12,000
Transmission fluid	●	●	●	●
Battery and cables	●	●	●	●
Belts	●	●	●	●
Brakes				●
Cabin air filter				●
Chassis lubrication		●		●
Check engine light on		●	●	●
Coolant				●
Engine air filter	●	●	●	●
Engine oil and filter	●	●	●	●
Exhaust	●	●	●	●
Fuel filter	●	●	●	●
Hoses	●	●	●	●
Lights	●	●	●	●
Power steering fluid		●	●	●
Spark plugs				●
Steering and suspension				●
Tire inflation, condition		●	●	●
Windshield washer fluid		●	●	●
Wiper blades		●		●

SOURCE: Car Care Council

AP

The O&M of a tollway

From page B2-4

Renewal

When the PNCC's franchise to operate the SLEX/Skyway expired last May, it applied for a franchise renewal with Congress. The TRB granted the PNCC a Toll Operation Certificate good for one year while the PNCC's franchise renewal application is pending in Congress.

At the same time, the TRB—heeding numerous complaints from the motoring public about the PSC's sloppy service and complying with the Arroyo administration's drive to privatize GOCCs (government-owned and controlled corporations)—offered the O&M of the SLEX/Skyway to Citra by the end of this year. Citra will reportedly form a new organization to take over after screening incumbent PSC employees and retaining the good ones. A generous compensation package of two and a half months' pay for every year of service is being offered to those who are not retained.

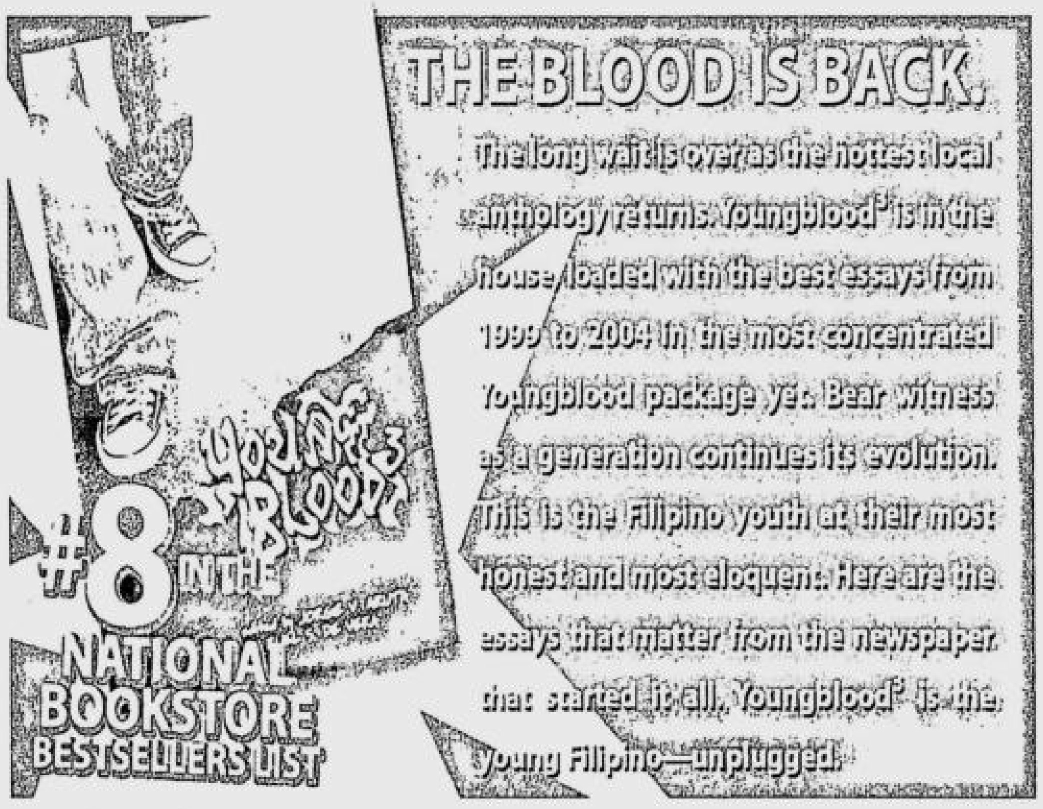
Protest rally

However, the PSC employees' union objected to the screening and rejected the package. Last month, the union began mounting a protest rally after office hours every day in front of the Bicutan interchange ramps which are located near the PSC building. Although the demos are impeding traffic flow at the Bicutan interchange, the union's leaders have announced plans to hold more rallies in front of the Citra office in the Ortigas area.

If the scuttlebutt is true that the PSC union will spread its protest rallies to the other toll plazas, then traffic jams on the SLEX/Skyway will get even more hellish. Talk about total disregard for the gross inconvenience and delay inflicted on the motoring public! Not to mention the thousands of liters of precious fuel wasted each day in stalled traffic. It only goes to show that the O&M of a tollway is better left to the private sector, as adequately proven at the North Luzon Expressway by the Manila North Tollways Corp.

* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: I started out with nothing and still have most of it left.


THE BLOOD IS BACK.
The long wait is over as the hottest local anthology returns. Youngblood³ is in the house, loaded with the best essays from 1999 to 2004 in the most concentrated Youngblood package yet. Bear witness as a generation continues its evolution. This is the Filipino youth at their most honest and most eloquent. Here are the essays that matter from the newspaper that started it all. Youngblood³ is the young Filipino—unplugged.

#8 IN THE NATIONAL BOOKSTORE BESTSELLERS LIST

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YOUNGBLOOD
Edited by Jorge V. Aruta and Ruel S. De Vera

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P150 newsprint

Now available from National Book Store and PowerBooks.

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We Know We Can, Thanks To You We Will!

Special Olympics Philippines and SPABA would like to thank all our friends who have helped us prepare for the upcoming 2007 Special Olympics World Summer Games in Shanghai, China.

Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry Inc.
Filipino Chinese Amateur Athletics Federation
Filipino Chinese Business Club Inc.
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
Abbey Manila Photography, ANC, Business World, GMA 7, John Tronco Photography, Malaya, Manila Standard, People's Journal, Philippine Star, Roland R. Roldan, The Daily Tribune, The Manila Times, UNTV 31

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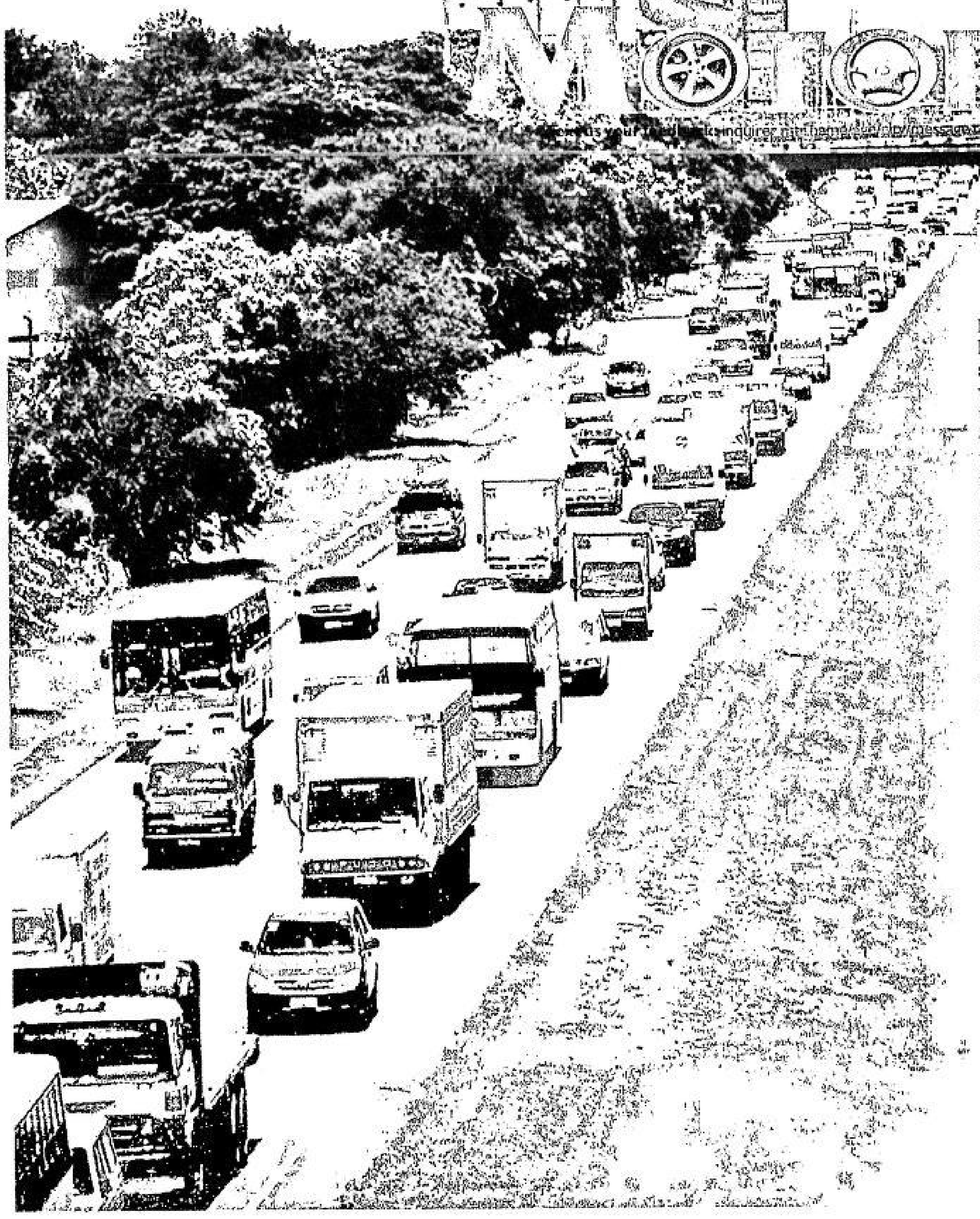
MOTORING



The O&M of a tollway

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

EVEN BEFORE THE FIRST "BER" MONTH heralding the approach of the Christmas season arrived, the South Luzon Expressway (SLEX) and the Skyway had already often become huge parking lots. And it's not only during the rush hours that traffic on the SLEX and Skyway slows to an inch-by-inch crawl or comes to a complete stop. I am one of tens of thousands of long-suffering motorists who have experienced monumental traffic gridlock going south even at 10 p.m. or midnight.

The Philippine Skyway Corp. (PSC), a subsidiary of the government-owned Philippine National Construction Corp., points at the ongoing repair of the Alabang viaduct as the cause of the horrendous traffic jams. But is that the real and only reason?

Mandated

The fact that the Toll Regulatory Board (TRB) has mandated the turnover of the O&M (operation and maintenance) of the SLEX/Skyway to a private contractor at the end of the year may have something to do with it. The impending takeover has upset many PSC employees and may be affecting the quality of their service. Not that the quality of PSC service has been all that good. On the contrary, the O&M of the SLEX/Skyway has been the subject of many motorists' complaints.

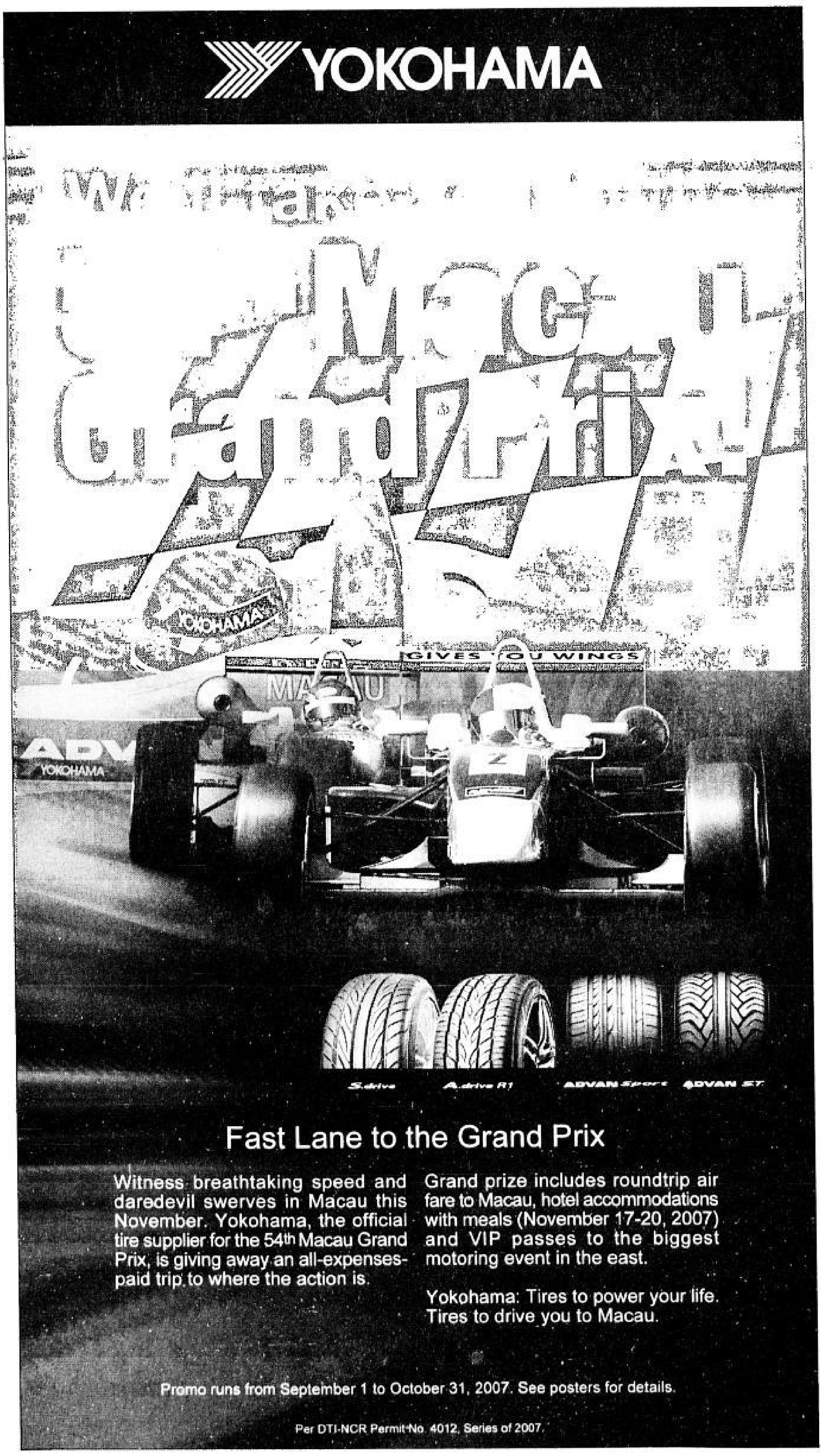
For 10 years now, the PSC has operated the SLEX/Skyway, which has a traffic volume averaging 175,000 motor vehicles a day and a daily revenue of around P10 million. Naturally, no corporation—especially a government-owned one (parent company PNCC is an attached agency of the Department of Public Works and Highways)—would like to let go of an enterprise raking in 10 million bucks a day.

30 years

The PNCC, originally a private company named Construction and Development Corp. (CDCP) owned by businessman Rodolfo Cuenca, began building and operating the South Luzon highway in 1967. In 1977, President Marcos, through a Presidential Decree, created a 30-year franchise for the PNCC to construct, operate and maintain a tollway covering Luzon from Aurora in the north to Lucena in the south including linkages to what was known then as the Greater Manila Area.

After Edsa 1 and the fall of Marcos, the PNCC was taken over by the government. When the PNCC could not completely implement the construction component of its franchise, it turned to joint ventures with private contractors. The PNCC formed a partnership with Citra Metro Manila Tollways Corp, a private contractor, to rehab the SLEX from Magallanes to Alabang and to build the Skyway, but retained the O&M thereof. The PNCC also partnered with MTD Capital, a private Malaysian firm, to improve the Alabang-Calamba stretch of the SLEX.

THE O&M/ B2-3



Fast Lane to the Grand Prix

Witness breathtaking speed and daredevil swerves in Macau this November. Yokohama, the official tire supplier for the 54th Macau Grand Prix, is giving away an all-expenses-paid trip to where the action is.

Grand prize includes roundtrip air fare to Macau, hotel accommodations with meals (November 17-20, 2007) and VIP passes to the biggest motoring event in the east.

Yokohama: Tires to power your life. Tires to drive you to Macau.

Promo runs from September 1 to October 31, 2007. See posters for details.

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 4012, Series of 2007.

TRANSPORT TRIVIA

By Emman Cena

PHOTO BY GREENPEACE

Earth-friendly jeepneys

NOT ONLY ARE THEY MORE GORGEOUS and glamorous than the ordinary jeepneys ruling our streets. They are, they say, healthier. So what makes an electronic jeepney or "e-jeepney" a healthy option?

It was only two months back since the first units rolled off the streets of Makati to test their endurance and emissions. Our electric jeepney fleet is first in Southeast Asia, mind you. But did you know what sets it apart from the ubiquitous jeepneys we have around?

The Greenpeace says these China-made vehicles will run on batteries charged overnight by a power plant fueled by biogas generated from the organic wastes. They will mitigate climate change steering away from the notorious fumes of diesel guzzlers. Whoa.

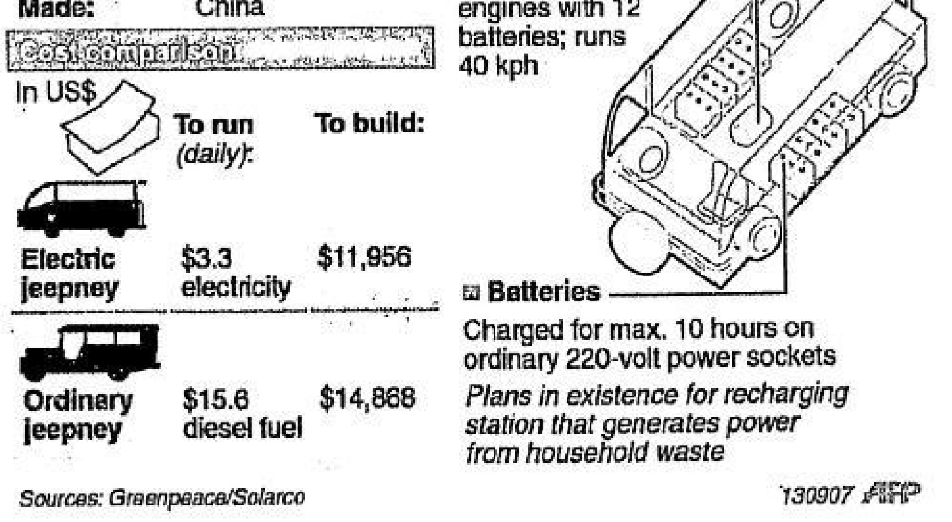
Powered by five-horsepower electric motor engines with 12 batteries, they say, that at full capacity, the vehicles can run 120 to 140 kilometers at around 40 kph on an eight-hour charge. The only setback is that e-jeeps are a bit pricey compared with ordinary ones. Each e-jeepney costs at least P400,000, around P100,000 more than the normal rate.

So, should we go healthy now?

The e-jeepney project is led by the Green Renewable Independent Power Producer (GRIPP) Inc., a network of civil society groups, business sector, local government units and environmental groups.

The electric jeepney

"E-jeepneys" being sought to replace diesel-fuelled jeepneys in the Philippines to ease air pollution problem



Capacity: 10-14

In operation: Six jeeps on trial *(plans in pipeline to import 50)*

Made: China

Cost comparison

In US$

	To run *(daily)*:	To build:
Electric jeepney	$3.3 electricity	$11,956
Ordinary jeepney	$15.6 diesel fuel	$14,868

Engine
Electric motor engines with 12 batteries; runs 40 kph

Batteries
Charged for max. 10 hours on ordinary 220-volt power sockets
Plans in existence for recharging station that generates power from household waste

Sources: Greenpeace/Solarco

130907 AFP

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"SWEETEST Thank You," courtesy of True Faith

Project gratitude

A Reader's Digest survey says Filipinos are among the least courteous people in the world for failing to say 'thank you.' A movement seeks to change that

By Niño Mark M. Sablan
2bU! Correspondent

THE PHILIPPINES IS world-renowned for having the most welcoming, most accommodating and most hospitable people. Then how do we explain the shocking news that in a recent study conducted by Reader's Digest, Metro Manila ranked among the least courteous cities in the world?

An integral part of the test was to check if the city residents constantly say "thank you" and, basing on our very low rank, the Filipinos have apparently forgotten those two words.

Blame it on how fast-paced our lives have become, to the point of not having the time to say "thank you" anymore. Blame it on forgetfulness, shyness or plain nonchalance. Whatever the cause of the thank-you absence is, one thing is for sure: Gratitude is making a huge comeback this Oct. 20.

Saddened and bothered by how Filipinos are showing less courtesy and gratitude nowadays, Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim and Vice Mayor Isko Moreno have taken the initiative in declaring Oct. 20 National Thank You Day by signing a city ordinance at the Manila City Hall, making the city of Manila the pioneering city to declare a "Thank You Day" in the country.

According to Mayor Lim, expressing gratitude is still given great value in the Filipino culture and that with the National Thank You Day, the habit of saying "thank you" will be fostered, also reminding everyone of the special people we might have been forgetting to thank.

TOBLERONE marketing manager Jondy Syjuco mixes the CD tracks.

The National Thank You Day is a partnership between the city of Manila and Swiss chocolate brand, Toblerone, which has become a universal token of gratitude. Says Jondy Syjuco, Toblerone marketing manager, "Toblerone has played a role in making people feel that kindness is valued. We are happy to be Mayor Lim's partner in his efforts to bring back the sense of gratitude in Manila."

And they are certainly not alone in this thanks movement. Several private enterprises such as Rudy Project, Time Depot, Royal Elastics, Fully Booked, Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf, Flower Express, All Flip-Flops, David & Goliath and T-Box have all joined to resurrect the fundamental value of expressing gratitude.

This gratefulness campaign is

PROJECT/ C3

Mark October ... as a red-letter day
It's the 1st National Thank You Day!
Join us at the SM Mall of Asia
As we celebrate the different ways of saying
thank you!

NATIONAL THANK YOU DAY
TOBLERONE
Launch
TOBLERONE
POLLS: Take your pick!
Download Songs
Featured Announcements
Thank You Day Partners

FOR POLLS, downloadables and National Thank You Day updates, visit www.thankyoudayphilippines.com

VENTURE 7
Christmas Bazaar 2007
October 7, 2007 (Sunday)
Hotel Intercontinental Manila
9:00am - 7:00pm
FOR INQUIRIES, PLEASE CALL 843-9507; 810-3307; 815-0669 (JENNY); 327-3083/84 ; 0915-7885109
WATCH OUT FOR OUR NEXT X'MAS BAZAAR
on Nov. 10 at the Renaissance Makati City Hotel (formely New World) and Dec. 2 at the Hotel Intercon

STAY 2 NIGHTS, AND ENJOY YOUR
THIRD NIGHT AS OUR COMPLIMENT!
INCLUSIONS:
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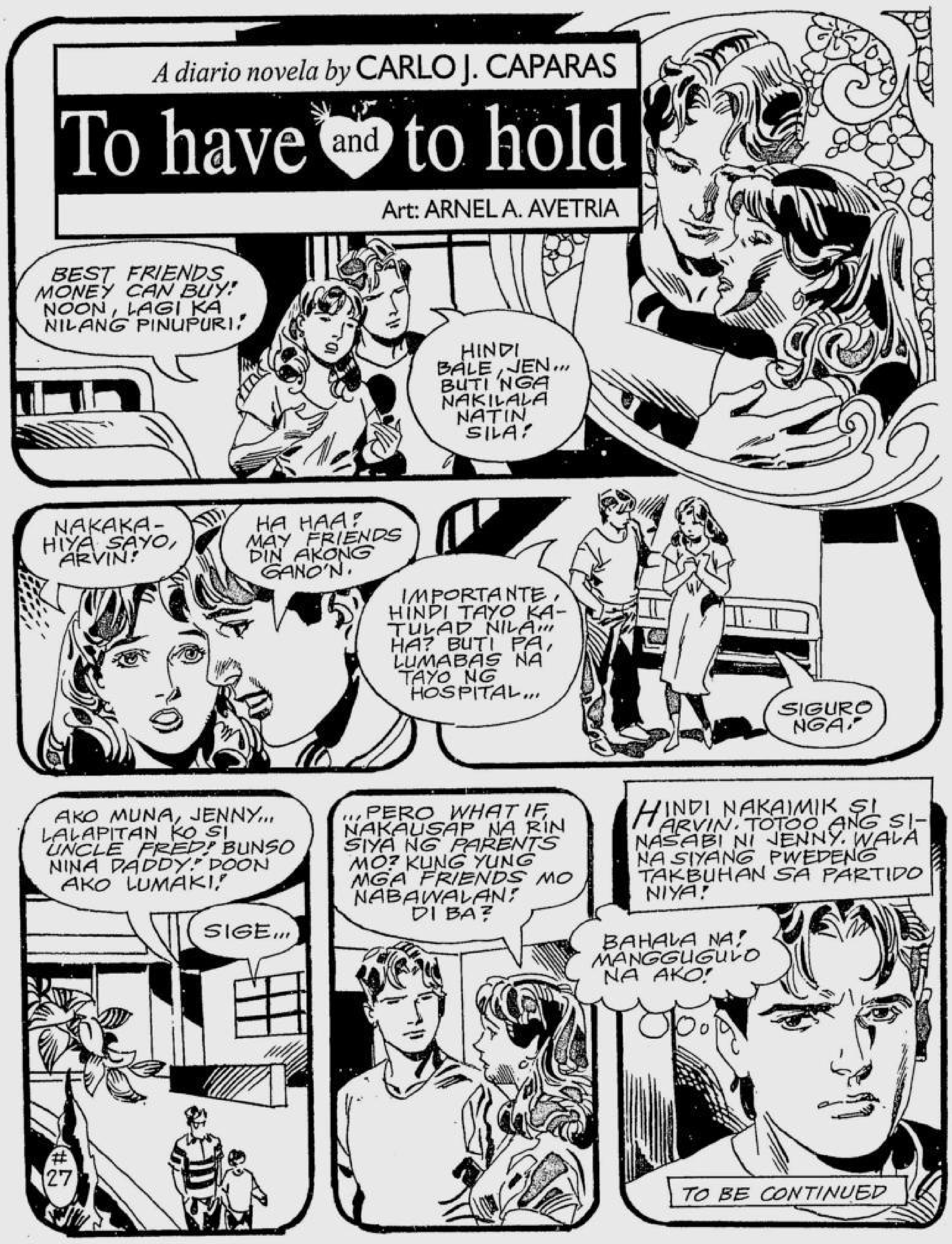
Non-stop ang action.
Dahil sa sarap ng light wafers wrapped in chocolate, 'di mo talaga titigilan ang Hello!
JACK'n JILL
HELLO! Coated
Hello! lang nang Hello!

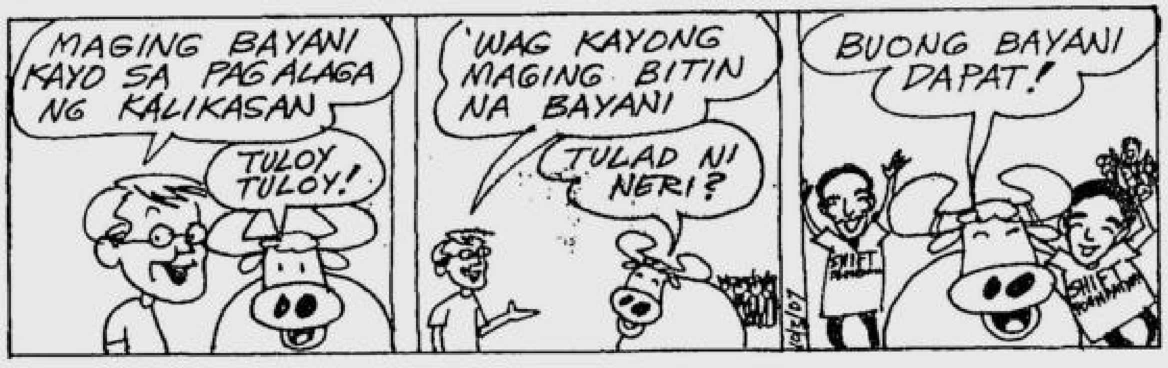
A diario novela by CARLO J. CAPARAS

To have and to hold

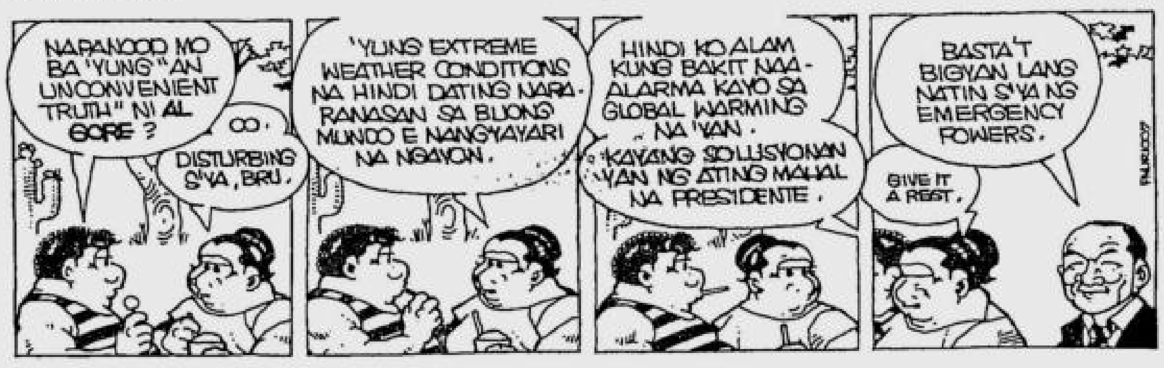
Art: ARNEL A. AVETRIA


BEST FRIENDS MONEY CAN BUY! NOON, LAGI KA NILANG PINUPURI!
HINDI BALE, JEN... BUTI 'NGA NAKILALA NATIN SILA!
NAKAKAHIYA SAYO, ARVIN!
HA HAA! MAY FRIENDS DIN AKONG GANO'N.
IMPORTANTE, HINDI TAYO KATULAD NILA... HA? BUTI PA, LUMABAS NA TAYO NG HOSPITAL...
SIGURO NGA!
AKO MUNA, JENNY... LALAPITAN KO SI UNCLE FRED! BUNSO NINA DADDY! DOON AKO LUMAKI!
SIGE...
#27
...PERO WHAT IF, NAKAUSAP NA RIN SIYA NG PARENTS MO? KUNG YUNG MGA FRIENDS MO NABAWALAN! DI BA?
HINDI NAKAIMIK SI ARVIN. TOTOO ANG SINASABI NI JENNY. WALA NA SIYANG PWEDENG TAKBUHAN SA PARTIDO NIYA!
BAHALA NA! MANGGUGULO NA AKO!
TO BE CONTINUED

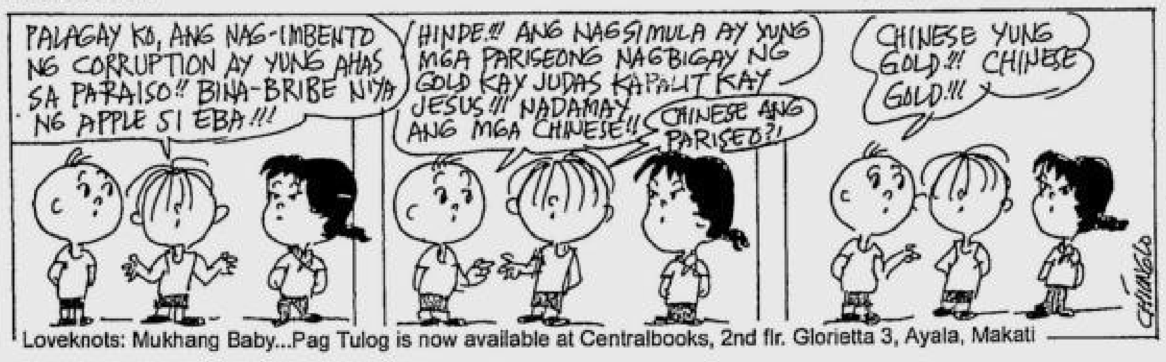
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


MAGING BAYANI KAYO SA PAG ALAGA NG KALIKASAN
TULOY TULOY!
'WAG KAYONG MAGING BITIN NA BAYANI
TULAD NI NERI?
BUONG BAYANI DAPAT!
SHIFT

PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR

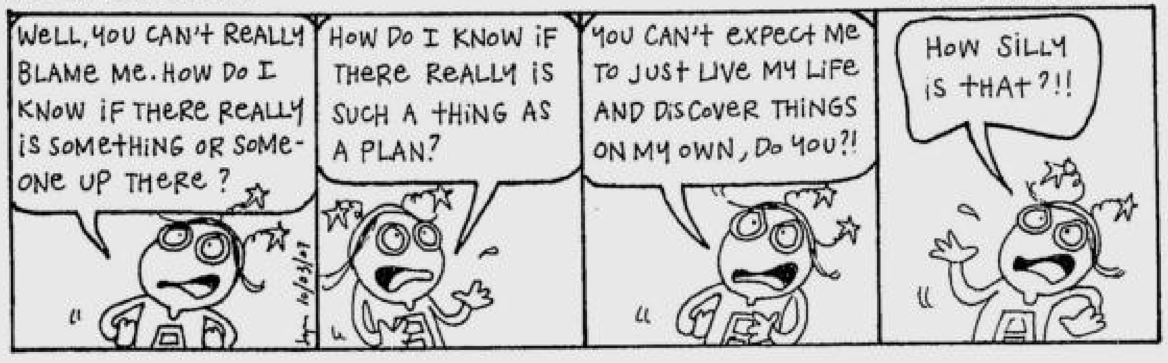

NAPANOOD MO BA 'YUNG "AN UNCONVENIENT TRUTH" NI AL GORE?
DISTURBING S'YA, BRU.
'YUNG EXTREME WEATHER CONDITIONS NA HINDI DATING NARARANASAN SA BUONG MUNDO E NANGYAYARI NA NGAYON.
HINDI KO ALAM KUNG BAKIT NAAALARMA KAYO SA GLOBAL WARMING NA 'YAN.
KAYANG SOLUSYONAN 'YAN NG ATING MAHAL NA PRESIDENTE.
BASTA'T BIGYAN LANG NATIN S'YA NG EMERGENCY POWERS.
GIVE IT A REST.

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

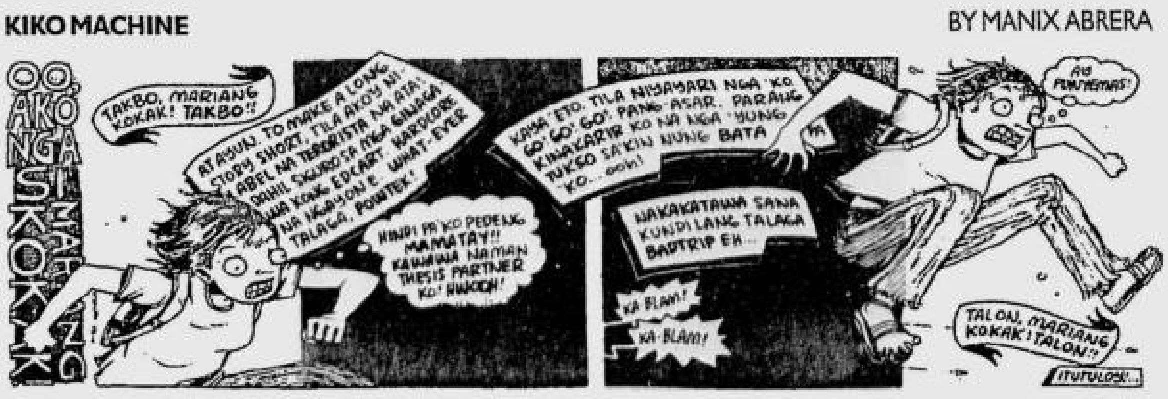

PALAGAY KO, ANG NAG-IMBENTO NG CORRUPTION AY YUNG AHAS SA PARAISO!! BINA-BRIBE NIYA NG APPLE SI EBA!!!
HINDE!!! ANG NAGSIMULA AY YUNG MGA PARISEONG NAGBIGAY NG GOLD KAY JUDAS KAPALIT KAY JESUS!!! NADAMAY ANG MGA CHINESE!!
CHINESE ANG PARISEO?!
CHINESE YUNG GOLD!!! CHINESE GOLD!!!
CHIONGLO

Loveknots: Mukhang Baby...Pag Tulog is now available at Centralbooks, 2nd flr. Glorietta 3, Ayala, Makati

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


WELL, YOU CAN'T REALLY BLAME ME. HOW DO I KNOW IF THERE REALLY IS SOMETHING OR SOMEONE UP THERE?
HOW DO I KNOW IF THERE REALLY IS SUCH A THING AS A PLAN?
YOU CAN'T EXPECT ME TO JUST LIVE MY LIFE AND DISCOVER THINGS ON MY OWN, DO YOU?!
HOW SILLY IS THAT?!!

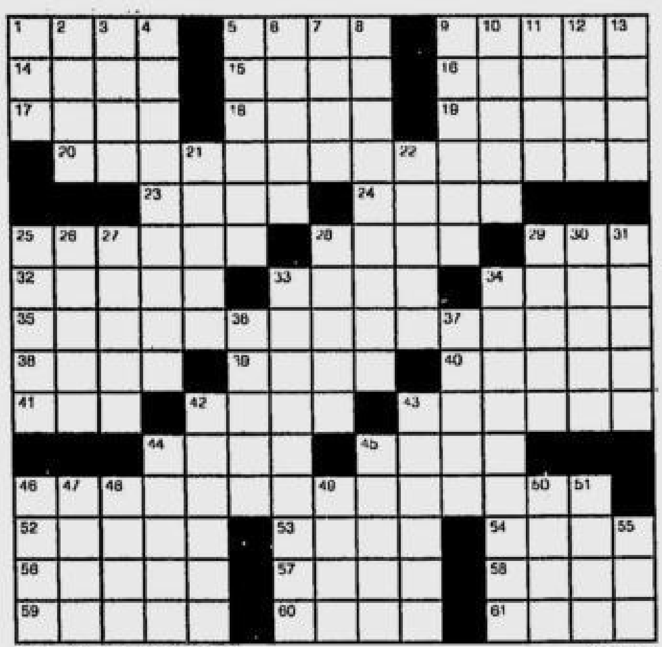
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


OO AKO NGA SI KOKAK
TAKBO, MARIANG KOKAK! TAKBO!!
AT AYUN, TO MAKE A LONG STORY SHORT, TILA AKO'Y NI-LABEL NA TERORISTA NA ATA! DAHIL SIGURO SA MGA GINAGAWA KONG EDCART HARDCORE NA NGAYON E. WHAT-EVER TALAGA. POWTEK!
HINDI PA 'KO PEDENG MAMATAY!! KAWAWA NAMAN THESIS PARTNER KO! HWOOH!
KAYA 'ETO. TILA NANGYARI NGA 'KO. GO! GO! GO! PANG-ASAR. PARANG KINAKARIR KO NA NGA 'YUNG TUKSO SA'KIN NUNG BATA 'KO... OOH!
NAKAKATAWA SANA KUNDI LANG TALAGA BADTRIP EH...
KA-BLAM!
KA-BLAM!
TALON, MARIANG KOKAK! TALON!!
ITUTULOY...

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Stair part
5 Northern Scandinavian
9 French assembly
14 Pedro's emphatic agreement
15 God of love
16 Early arcade name
17 Israeli airline
18 Clinton cabinet member
19 Writer Alison
20 Cranes
23 Historic years
24 Writer Murdoch
25 Talking bird
28 Taj Mahal city
29 Bad actor
32 Conception of perfection
33 Toledo's lake
34 Weekend cowboy
35 Cranes
38 Art Deco illustrator
39 Us in Paris
40 First name in B-29 lore
41 Observe
42 Subdue
43 Hags
44 Stiff hair
45 Pre-coll. exams
46 Cranes
52 Truman's birthplace
53 Borodin's prince
54 Slangy negative
56 New York city
57 Swiss river
58 McEntire sitcom
59 Ancient physician
60 Street-sign abbr.
61 Insolent rejoinder

DOWN
1 Compass pt.
2 Turn, as soil
3 Actor Morales
4 Robber's deed
5 Rodeo rope
6 Revival meeting shouts
7 Early video game
8 Early bloomers
9 Mint family plant
10 Needle cases
11 Drug agt.
12 Indy winner Luyendyk
13 Connections
21 Fairy-tale toll collector
22 Goofed
25 Heaps
26 Cherish
27 French income, perhaps
28 Bicker
29 One of HOMES
30 Muddle
31 Flat-topped hills
33 Self-centered type
34 Mesozoic creatures
36 Maternally related
37 Bunk in a liner
42 Iran's capital
43 Core groups
44 Michener title
45 Have a sound sleep?
46 Fake coin
47 See-yal
48 Old-time actor Jannings
49 Thickening agent
50 Perlman of "Cheers"
51 Bathing places
55 Doesn't lack



By Philip J. Anderson
Portland, OR
10/3/07

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

S	L	A	M		S	T	A	R		A	B	H	O	R
T	O	B	Y		E	A	S	E		L	E	A	S	E
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B	E	T	A	K	E	N	F	O	R	A	F	O	O	L
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S	A	U	N	A		P	L	E	A		K	I	W	I
T	U	R	N	T	H	E	T	A	B	L	E	S	O	N
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S	T	O	R	E		A	W	R	Y		M	E	L	D

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10/3/07

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis SudoKu By Dave Green

9	5	6						
7			5			2		
2		3		4		9	5	
	3			7				
		2	4		5	1		
				2			7	
		5		8		6		1
	8				6			5
6						4	9	8

Difficulty Level ★★★
10/03

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Answer to previous puzzle

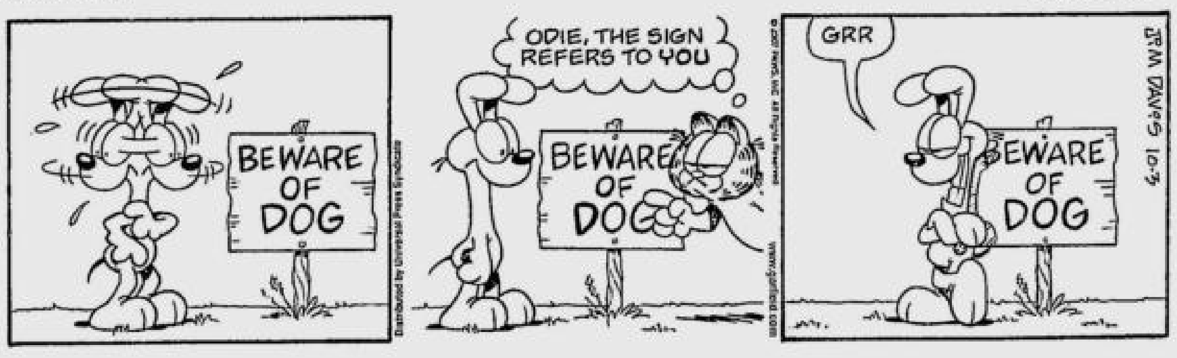
9	7	3	1	4	2	5	6	8
6	8	2	9	7	5	4	1	3
5	4	1	8	3	6	7	9	2
8	1	7	3	5	4	9	2	6
2	3	6	7	1	9	8	4	5
4	5	9	6	2	8	1	3	7
7	6	4	5	9	3	2	8	1
3	9	5	2	8	1	6	7	4
1	2	8	4	6	7	3	5	9

Difficulty Level ★★
10/02

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

GARFIELD BY JIM DAVIS


BEWARE OF DOG
ODIE, THE SIGN REFERS TO YOU
GRR
JIM DAVIS 10-3

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have an active mind and great organizational skills. You have excellent taste, and you love beauty and glamour in your surroundings. Your social skills are tops, which is why you are popular. You work hard and know how to promote your ideas. In the year ahead, if you work to build and construct something, your rewards will follow!

Birthdate of: Gwen Stefani, singer; Neve Campbell, actress; Clive Owen, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): This is an unusually romantic day. Relationships that begin now will be passionate, intense and memorable! It's easy to develop a crush on someone right now.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): This is a wonderful day to make improvements to where you live. You can make things look more attractive, especially with bathrooms or any kind of renovation. Even family relationships can improve!

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You're very ardent in your expression of affection to anyone today. You feel everything very strongly! (Don't worry—no one will laugh; everyone loves to be loved.)

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): It's possible you'll see new ways of earning money today or discover new sources of income. Conversely, if you're spending money, you're obsessive about wanting to buy something.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): All your relationships are much more intense today. You might feel a strong attraction for someone, in fact, you probably will. It's not a boring day!

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Today is capable of producing some profound or unusual insights within you. You see things with new eyes. Some kind of discovery will put a new spin on things for you.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Relations with friends and even members of groups are quite intense today but meaningful. Nothing is casual. People mean what they say, and they say what they mean!

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You make a marvelous impression on everyone today. In fact, people might see you with new eyes, as it were—even though from your point of view, you're just the same. (Go figure.)

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You have a strong desire for adventure today. Perhaps you're keen to travel somewhere or visit someplace. You also want to study or learn something new. You're definitely open to new ideas.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): This is a passionate day for you. (Passionate in every sense of the word, and certainly physical.) However, you'll also feel strongly about how something is shared.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Relations with partners and close friends are warm and intense today. People easily express their affection for you, and vice versa.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You might be in a position to introduce marvelous reforms or make improvements, especially in the appearance of things at work. You appreciate your co-workers today.

Project gratitude

From page C1

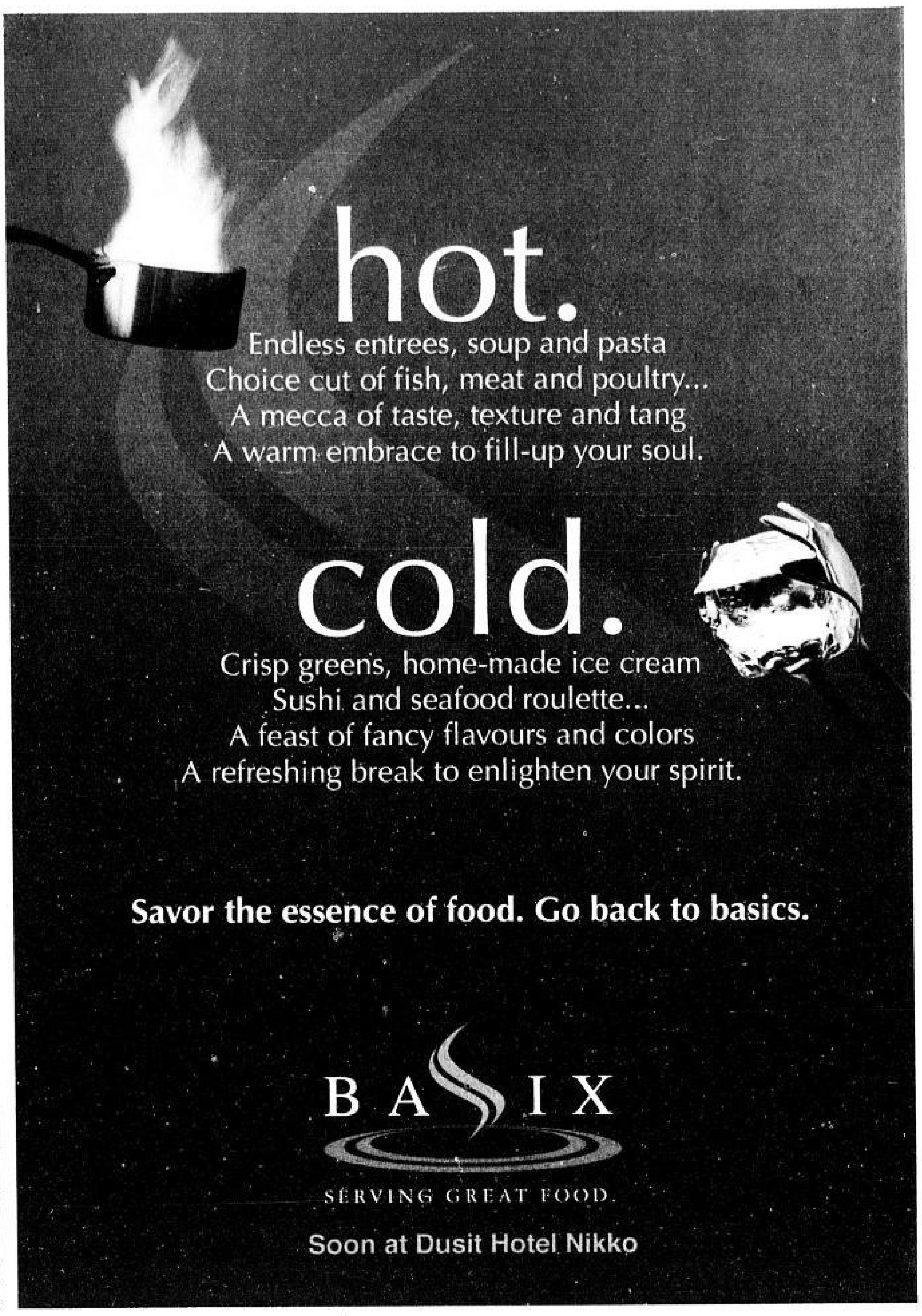
already on full-blast mode. Esteemed illustrator Rina Albert designed special Thank You cards for the event and they are available at all Thank You Centers sprinkled in the metro. There is also the official National Thank You Day website—www.thankyoudayphilippines.com—where there are polls, downloadables and event updates.

Also available in the site are original sweet songs of gratitude composed by today's hottest musical acts especially for the campaign: "Tempestuous Tempers" by Cynthia Alexander, "Sweetest Thank You" by True Faith, "Purple-Colored Skies" by Mozzie, "Bionic" by Stonefree, "Sweet" by Salindiwa and "Let's Get Together" by Reggae Mistress. And there is absolutely no need to worry about infringing upon copyrights; anyone is more than welcome to download all these compositions. Now that's something to be thankful for.

The National Thank You Day on Oct. 20 at the SM Mall of Asia will be a huge celebration filled with contests, celebrities, musical performances, Toblerone sweets and, of course, gratitude. With the goal of reviving the lost art of vocally expressing gratitude and making Metro Manila a more appreciative and grateful city, how can you not be part of the movement?

E-mail the author at ninomarksablan@yahoo.com

IT'S BACK!
ALL-OUT 7-ELEVEN BLOWOUT!
Great Taste
Great Taste
trio
3 in 1 Complete Coffee Mix
EXTRA STRONG
FREE
Great Taste Trio Coffee 18g
ONLY AT
For every purchase of any 7-Eleven Quick Bites Triangular Sandwich.
Free item is valid from October 3 to 9, 2007 only and may be claimed at all 7-Eleven stores except in Nueva Ecija, Dagupan, Tarlac, Pangasinan & Baguio


hot.
Endless entrees, soup and pasta
Choice cut of fish, meat and poultry...
A mecca of taste, texture and tang
A warm embrace to fill-up your soul.
cold.
Crisp greens, home-made ice cream
Sushi and seafood roulette...
A feast of fancy flavours and colors
A refreshing break to enlighten your spirit.
Savor the essence of food. Go back to basics.
BASIX
SERVING GREAT FOOD.
Soon at Dusit Hotel Nikko

HEALTHY AND ACTIVE LIFESTYLE

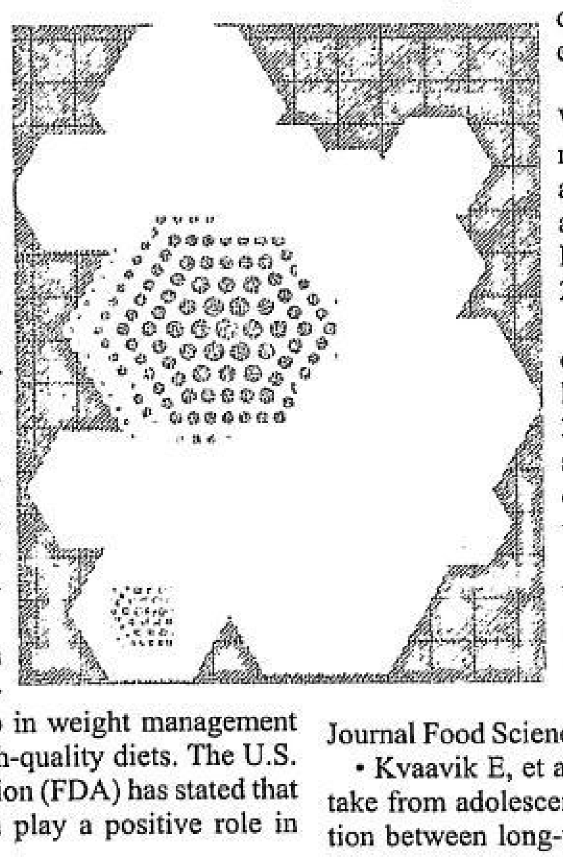
Information for Living Right

Question

Don't sugary carbonated soft drinks offer only empty calories and lack any real nutritional value? Do sugar-free soft drinks cause weight gain?

Answer

No to both questions; besides basic hydration, carbonated soft drinks can also provide carbohydrate fuel that supplies energy necessary for daily activities. All beverages can have a place in a well-balanced diet. Carbonated soft drinks can help quench your thirst and help provide your body with its daily fluid needs, but they should not be the only beverage you consume. What matters most is that your diet includes nutrients from a variety of foods and beverages, and that you watch your total caloric intake.



In fact, the phrase "empty calories" is a very misleading and incorrect description. To your body, all calories count. As long as you balance the calories you take in with the calories you burn, any food or beverage can be part of a healthy, enjoyable diet. People can choose the type of soft drink that best suits their tastes and calorie needs, carbonated soft drinks are now available at several caloric levels: no-calorie, low-calorie, reduced-calorie and regular-calorie.

Studies have also shown that low-calorie and no-calorie sweeteners can help in weight management and are associated with high-quality diets. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has stated that low-calorie soft drinks can play a positive role in weight management.

For many people, children's soft drink consumption also raises additional issues about nutrition, but many of the concerns don't pan out:

o Two national surveys show that soft drinks are not associated with kids being overweight, having a poor-quality diet or having low physical activity.

o A study of 1,335 boys and girls aged 12 to 15 who regularly drank carbonated soft drinks found they had sufficient milk intake to have strong bones.

o No relationship between soft drink consumption and obesity was found in a study of more than 100,000 school-aged children in 34 countries.

The bottom line is that soft drinks can be part of a balanced diet, and the calories you consume should not be greater than the calories you use if you want to maintain a healthy weight.

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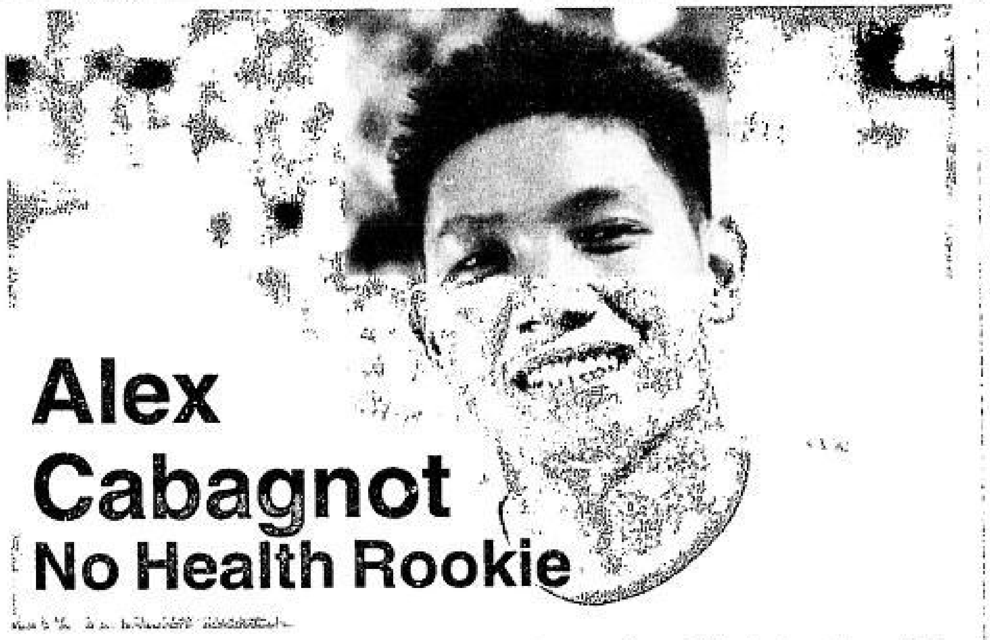

Alex Cabagnot

No Health Rookie

Being a basketball player isn't just about having 'game.' Of course it's important to have a couple of slamming moves, or know a few plays. But it's not just about the right shoes, or being extremely tall. In short, being a basketball player isn't about what you see on the outside. Like most things in life, it's what's inside that counts. Just ask the Philippine Basketball Association's most promising player, Coca-Cola Tiger Alex Cabagnot.

As a kid, Alex already knew he wanted to be a basketball player. That's why early on, he took his basketball destiny into his own hands. "I joined a lot of basketball clinics when I was young. I think it's a key essential to join basketball camps to learn your fundamentals, and just know the basic skills while you're young."

With that take charge attitude, it's now wonder Alex is at the top of his game. But do you know that the secret to his amazing court skills only boil down to one thing? It's actually something that everybody can posses, whoever you are or whatever your profession is: health.

Alex believes in living a balanced, healthy and active lifestyle or HAL. This includes practicing three key values: eating a balanced diet, regular physical activity and proper hydration. These are things that everybody can do, yes, even you. You don't have to have a lot of money or time to do them. You just need the right attitude and some will power to get healthier and live a better life. Who doesn't want that?

Eating a balanced diet doesn't mean you have to eliminate your favorite foods out of the menu. Different foods provide your body with different things: energy, vitamins and minerals. What it actually means is eating a wide variety of foods to meet your daily caloric and nutritional needs. 'Junk foods' are a myth. There are only 'junk diets' or bad combinations of food and excessive eating. The key here is balance, not too much and not too little.

Feeling sluggish and tired all the time? You need to get into this second HAL value: regular physical activity. But don't think you necessarily have to go to the gym or take up a sport to be active. That's fine for some people but if you're not into those things then there are actually many other things you can do. Why not go biking or walking with your family? Get your friends to join you for a jog around the block. In fact, household chores like washing clothes, sweeping and mopping can help you burn calories too. Anything to get your body moving, sweating and burning calories. Just remember to get an hour to an hour and a half of physical activities everyday.

This is one HAL value that Alex takes to heart the most. "Physical activity is really important just to have a healthy and active lifestyle. You don't just want to be a couch potato or just watch TV. A good sweat is always a good thing, whether it's just running, playing basketball, or playing with your friends, it's very important."

Lastly, the third HAL value is something that most people tend to forget about, which is a big shame. This is because it's actually one of the most important aspects of health: hydration. It simply means the proper amount of fluids in your body. If you're dehydrated, it means you need to drink more so you don't feel dizzy or tired.

But hold on a second, if you're thinking that the old "8-glasses-a-day" rule still applies, read on. According to the Beverage Institute for Health and Wellness (BIHW) website, you actually need 11-16 cups of total fluids each day, depending on age, weight, gender, the weather and level of physical activity. Fluids also mean that you don't need to stick to just water. Although it's important that you do drink H20, you can also drink your favorite soft drinks, teas and juices to stay hydrated. Foods with water like soups, stews, fruits and vegetables can help too.

Hydration is also tops in Alex' book. According to him, "That's another important thing. You've got to keep yourself hydrated at all times. If you don't, you get cramps and you can't perform with your best abilities. So you've always got to drink a lot of water and have a lot of fluids in your body because you lose so much when you play. You have to replenish what you lose."

Alex also has some words of advice for budding basketball players. "Make sure you're coach-able, stay healthy, stay away from all the bad stuff that you can do, like vices and stuff like that and listen to your coaches. You can never go wrong with that."

He also encourages everyone to start living a balanced, healthy and active lifestyle today. For more information about your health and beverages, log on to the BIHW website at www.thebeverageinstitute.org.

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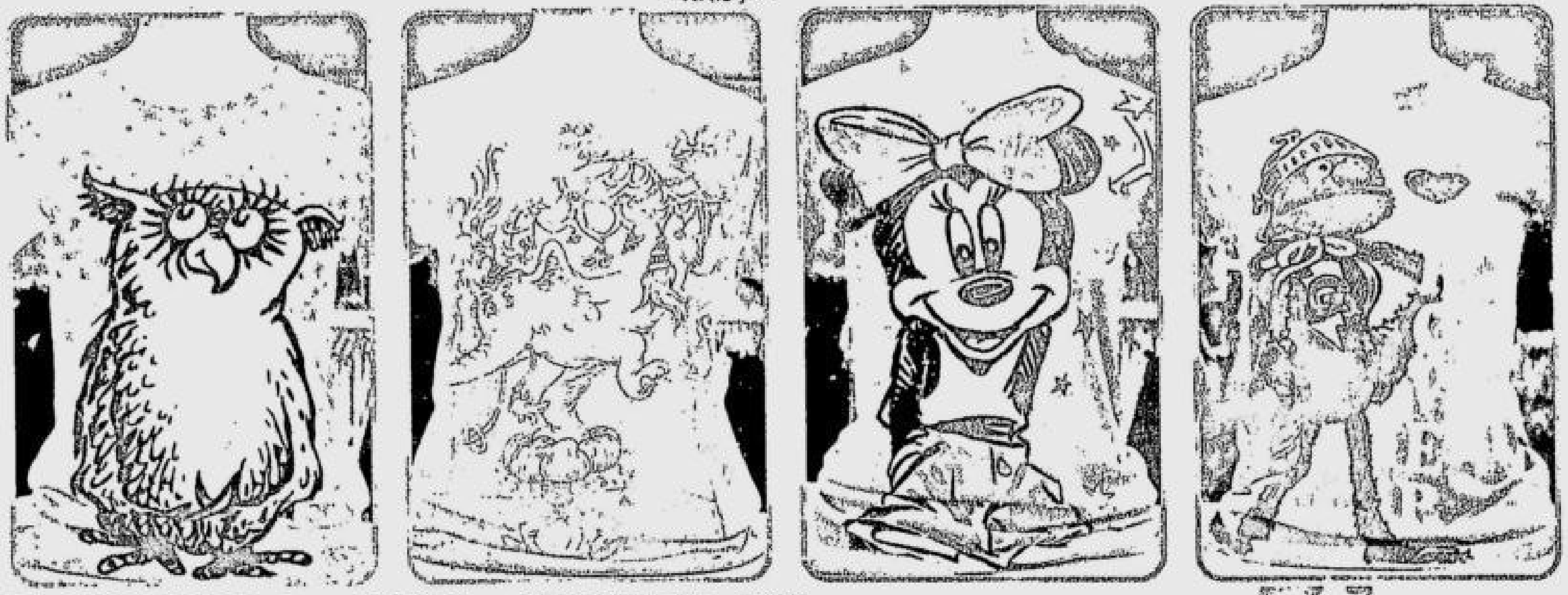
A DEAR DEER. Walt Disney, P1,250



DR. SEUSS, P1,250; Dr. Seuss, P1,250; Disney, P795; Mighty Fine, P1,250

SHOP SHOOTERS

Tee time

By Pam Pastor
Photos by Rudy Esperas

THE T-SHIRT TREND HAS BEEN ON a steady rise for a while now—and it's one that we are loving.

Screaming and tacky fashion logos that used to be emblazoned on everyone's chests have been replaced with icons from our childhood—the Smurfs, My Little Pony, Rainbow Brite, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, characters from Dr. Seuss, Sesame Street and Disney, and even our favorite video games.

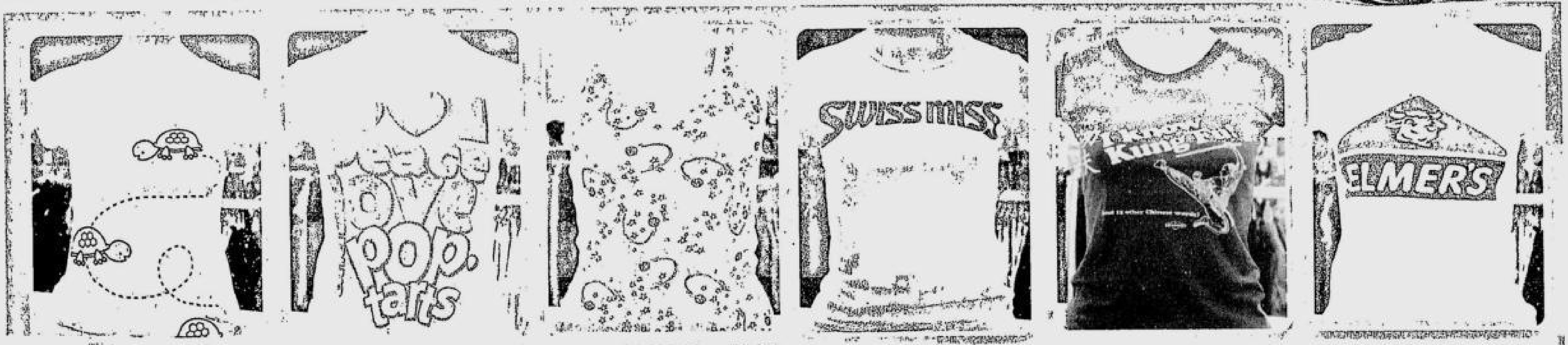
Familiar brands that bring back memories have earned prime T-shirt spots, too—Pop Tarts, Swiss Miss, Lifesavers, Reese's, even Elmer's Glue.

And the best part about these shirts is they're ultra-soft—which makes you feel as though you've really raided your childhood closet.

But since our childhood closets only exist in our heads now, we've settled for the next best thing. We raided Rustan's and found a lot of shirts under the brands Mighty Fine, Altru, New Breed, Disney and Dr. Seuss. They give a double dose of comfort and nostalgia that you can pull over your head.

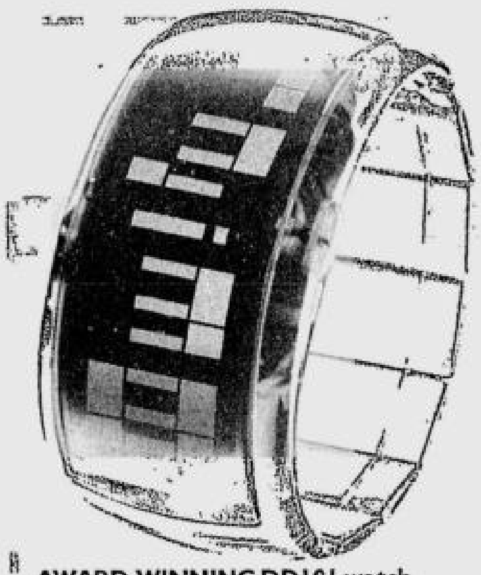
> These ultra-soft, ultra-comfy shirts will make you feel as though you've raided your childhood closet

SUPER SEUSS. Dr. Seuss, P1,250



NEW Breed, P895; Mighty Fine, P1,250; Dr. Seuss, P795; Altru, P1,450; New Breed, P895; Altru, P1,450

Perfect timing



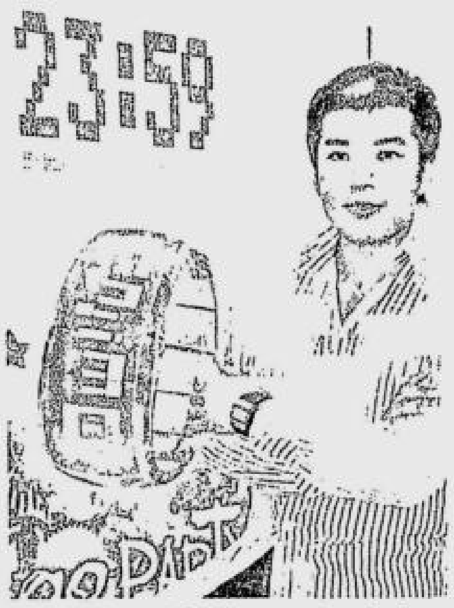
AWARD-WINNING DD101 watch resembles a stylish bangle.

By Niño Mark M. Sablan
2bU! Correspondent

ONCE UPON A TIME, WATCHES were purchased, worn and used mainly for time-telling. Amazingly, watches have now evolved into trendy accessories that just happen to also tell the time.

But while a flashy, attention-grabbing and unique wristwatch scores high among today's teeners, nothing can beat a time-teller that scores high on the technological side as well.

Enter ODM, a dynamic designer watch brand that was established in 1999. Inspired by originality, dynamism and minimalism—hence the brand name—it boasts of timepieces that are innovative in both technology and design. In fact, ODM reestablished itself in 2006 to be an "innovative trendy timewear" brand, symbolizing the company's aim to adopt new technologies and design innovative ornamental wristwatches.



FRANK Lam, ODM international sales and marketing manager

According to Frank Lam, ODM international sales and marketing manager, coming up with innovative watch designs and exclusive technology is something they are passionately committed to. "We do not limit ourselves," he explains. "We find specialists in innovative technology and incorporate it into the designs."

He adds, "Every day we come up with new designs." In fact, according to Frank, ideas would just crop up any time of the day and when they do, they hold sudden meetings to talk about the suggestions and even instantly develop them.

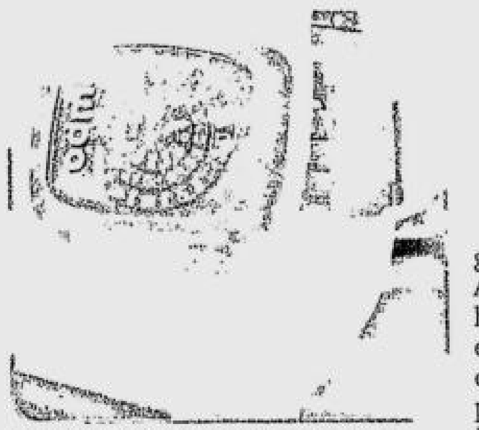
And how these fresh ideas have paid off.

As an international brand, ODM is the first ever Hong Kong watch brand to participate in Baselworld in 2003. Since then, the brand has been continuously taking part in this worldwide event along with other world-class brand names.

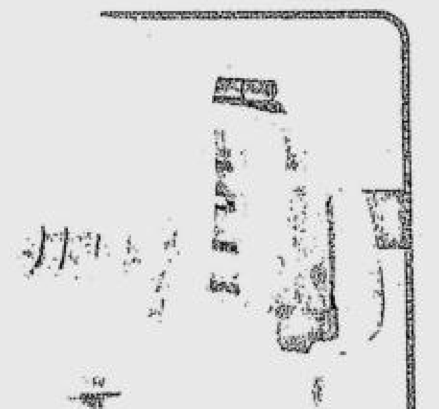
With innovation as one of the brand's selling points, there's no wonder how ODM has also won various international recognitions such as China's iF Design Award, Germany's Reddot Design Award, and the USA and Japan Good Design Award, which have all encouraged the brand to further create even more groundbreaking designs.

Even from afar, ODM watches are an instant scene-stealer.

Take, for example, the DD100 model, which, with its wide bracelet and vibrant colors, never fails to catch everyone's eyes.



DD100 watch is available in various colors.



And then there is also the award-winning ODM DD101 watch. Apart from looking more like a stylish bangle, it also boasts of innovative technology through its curved glass panel for the watch face. After all, most watch faces are traditionally flat.

Frank adds that in the last five years, the Philippines has been changing a lot when it comes to fashion sense and trend response. Frank even thinks the country is just a couple of years behind the very fashion-forward Japan.

With the remarkable success achieved by the brand in Asia, its next goal is to penetrate the European and American markets. At present, ODM has a distribution network that reaches more than 30 countries, plus two overseas offices in Paris and Singapore for expanding market presence in these regions.

With its wide array of unique, vivid and attention-grabbing watches, ODM is the perfect watch brand for unique individuals who want to be a step ahead or a notch higher in both design and technology. Asked to describe the target market of ODM, Frank answers, "Fashionable, trendy, innovative. If you want to be that person, you have to buy ODM."

ODM timepieces are available at all L Timestudio stores and selected specialty stores nationwide.

E-mail the author at ninomarksablan@yahoo.com

Dengue Disclosed
The eye opening truth about Dengue

Many things jeopardize our family's safety and health. Most are within plain sight and are easily spotted. One of the most fatal is the deadly disease known as Dengue.

Dengue is contracted when an Aedes Aegypti mosquito bites. The Aedes mosquito is small and can get to almost anywhere in your home and lay eggs. Not only is it hard to keep these small insects away it also can lay eggs in unexpected places and pose as a threat to your family's well being.

One female mosquito lays up to 100 eggs at a time, all of which can hatch in one day. Eggs can lie dormant in dry conditions for up to 9 months, hatching long after the rainy season has ended. This heightens the possibility of your child getting bitten. Since this disease is a year round threat we must be vigilant not just during the rainy season but all year round.

Dengue in the Philippines

According to The World Health Organization (WHO) there are about 50 million Dengue cases a year and over 400,000 cases of the fatal Dengue hemorrhagic fever. Dengue is one of the leading causes of childhood deaths in Asia. In the Philippines, 36,712 infections were reported in 2006 alone.

The humid and damp tropical weather of the Philippines makes it conducive to breeding for the Aedes Aegypti mosquito which breeds in clean stagnant water. Water that may be in pails, flower pots, gutters, vases and buckets commonly found all over the house.

Dengue is also not easily spotted in children because it exhibits the same symptoms as the flu, like: high fever, head and joint aches, nausea, fatigue and pain behind the eyes. The fever is inconsistent making parents believe that it's just a regular case of the flu. Until blood tests show the infection. If untreated, Dengue can turn into hemorrhagic fever and become fatal.

Your Family's Best Defense against Dengue

SC Johnson, the world's leading pest control expert, has a formidable range of Baygon and OFF! products to help ensure your family's health and well-being:

- Baygon Mosquito Killer aerosol guarantees fastest knockdown. It is an effective instant acting spray that lets you get to the hard to reach places where mosquitoes lurk. Like below the sink, behind appliances and curtains, under the bed and in closets. Spray twice a day - at dawn and dusk when the Aedes Aegypti is most active.
- Baygon Liquid Mosquito Repeller provides continuous protection indoors for up to 20 square meters from where it is plugged. If used 8 hours a day it can keep mosquitoes away for up to 30 days.
- Baygon Electric Mosquito Killer eliminates mosquitoes the worry free way. An alternative to the coil it simply plugs into the wall and gets rid of mosquitoes.
- Baygon Scented Coil keeps mosquitoes at bay. Aside from indoors it can also be used outdoors where plugs are not present like in gardens and verandas where mosquitoes thrive. It has a pleasing lavender scent that is easy on the nose but tough on mosquitoes.
- OFF! Overtime gives your family up to 8 hours of protection whenever they leave home. With the new Dermcool formula, protection against mosquitoes is now more comfortable.

For the most effective defense against Dengue, trust Baygon and OFF!

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Emmie G. Velarde

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NADIA Lee Cien Shami

Miss RP Int'l in best form

By Armin Adina

FILIPINO-JORDANIAN NADIA LEE Cien Shami—model, radio jock, dancer and photographer—is out to add another entry to her long list of occupations.

The 19-year-old native of Cotabato left for Tokyo, Japan, on Sept. 30 to compete for the Miss International title, which has been held by Philippine beauties Precious Lara Quigaman (2005), Melanie Marquez (1979), Aurora Pijuan (1970) and Gemma Cruz (1964).

"I have butterflies in my stomach now," Nadia revealed during her sendoff at the Araneta Coliseum Gazebo last Thursday, where she displayed her winning form. "I've seen the pictures of the other contestants. They are all so beautiful and everyone has a big chance to win. That is why I am asking for your prayers and support."

After her coronation as Binibining Pilipinas-International in March, the 5-foot-9 beauty lost almost 10 pounds, thanks to her strict diet and regular gym visits and Pilates sessions.

"I hope to become the fifth Filipina to bring home the title," said Nadia, who was crowned Miss Philippines-Air in 2005.

Nadia, who has joined a host of national and regional beauty tilts, confessed to being most serious in her training for Miss International.

As part of her grooming, she was made to take lessons in catwalk, poise, projection and even makeup application from Miss World 2005 Continental Queen of Beauty Karla Bautista, Miss Universe 2005 photogenic winner Gionna Cabrera and former titleholders Karen Agustin, Anna Maris Igpit and Denille Lou Valmonte.

She was also given an overview of the international competition and pointers on how to catch the attention of the judges,

MISS RP/ D2

OPENING TODAY

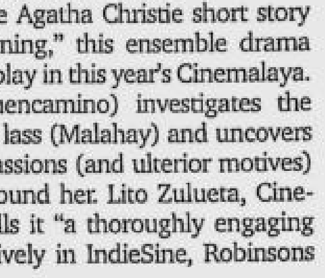
Tukso

Stars Irma Adlawan, Diana Malahay, Shamaine Buencamino, Ricky Davao, Soliman Cruz, Sid Lucero, Ping Medina

Directed by Dennis Marasigan

Inspired by the Agatha Christie short story "Death by Drowning," this ensemble drama won Best Screenplay in this year's Cinemalaya. A lady cop (Buencamino) investigates the death of a barrio lass (Malahay) and uncovers the conflicting passions (and ulterior motives) of the people around her. Lito Zulueta, Cinemalaya juror, calls it "a thoroughly engaging mystery." Exclusively in IndieSine, Robinsons Galleria.

Evening



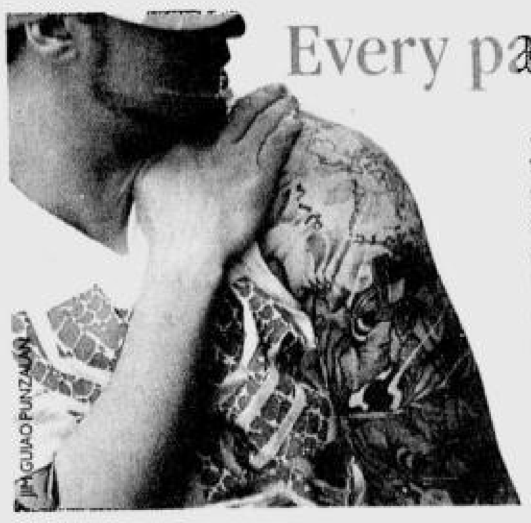
Stars Claire Danes, Meryl Streep, Glenn Close, Vanessa Redgrave, Toni Colette

Directed by Lajos Koltai

Based on a novel by Susan Minot, this drama focuses on a woman's memories as recounted on her deathbed. Amy Biancolli of Houston Chronicle describes it as "a poignant and bravura showcase of acting talent." Carina Chocano of Los Angeles Times says "it lurches between the morose and the sentimental."

OPENING/ D3

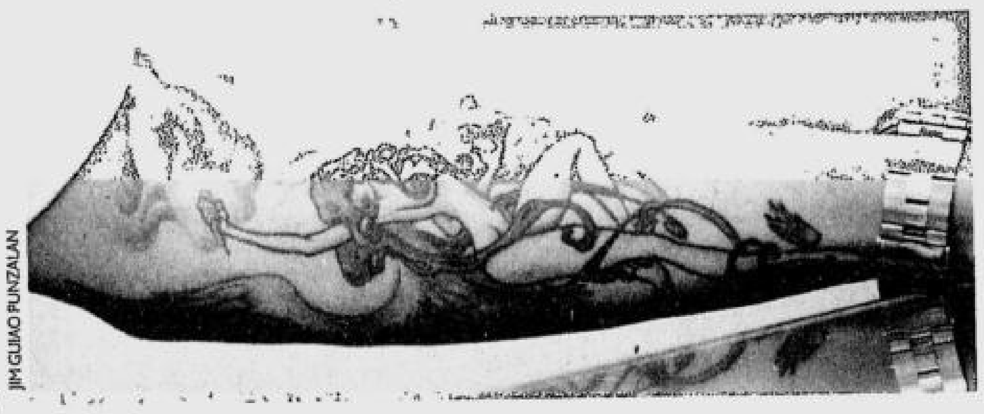
Every part of this int'l star's body art tells a story . . .



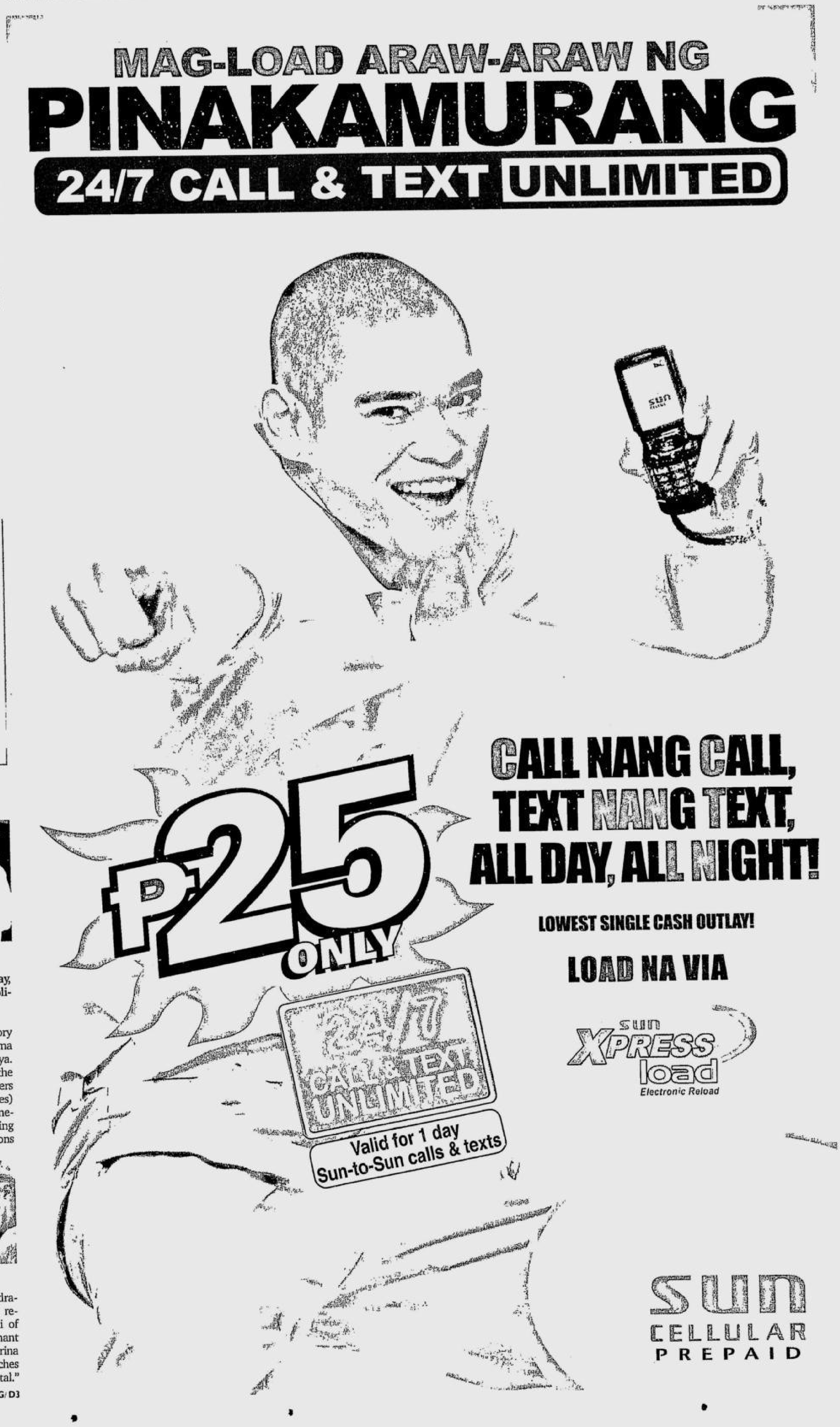
JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

. . . but not that one where then teen star Niño Muhlach pulled him out of the audience and onto the stage of "That's Entertainment." Kuya Germs asked what he could do, and the 4-year-old sang "Born in the USA." Now, 21 years later, he's made a H'wood movie and has a hit CD in France, Belgium, Germany, and Switzerland.

TAKE 5/ D4



JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN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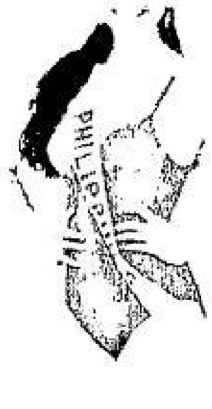
Miss RP Int'l in best form

From page D1

the audience and her fellow contestants.

But not everything went as planned. For almost a year, the international organizers harped about a month-long competition to be held both in Japan and China, only to announce way into the homestretch that Miss International delegates will only spend two weeks in Tokyo and the coronation night will be held in Japan on Oct. 15 and not in China on Oct. 30 as earlier announced.

The confusion notwithstanding, Nadia expressed excitement on her first trip abroad. "I will tell my fellow contestants and the Japanese people that the Philippines is a beautiful country, blessed with magnificent beaches, tropical fruits and warm people."

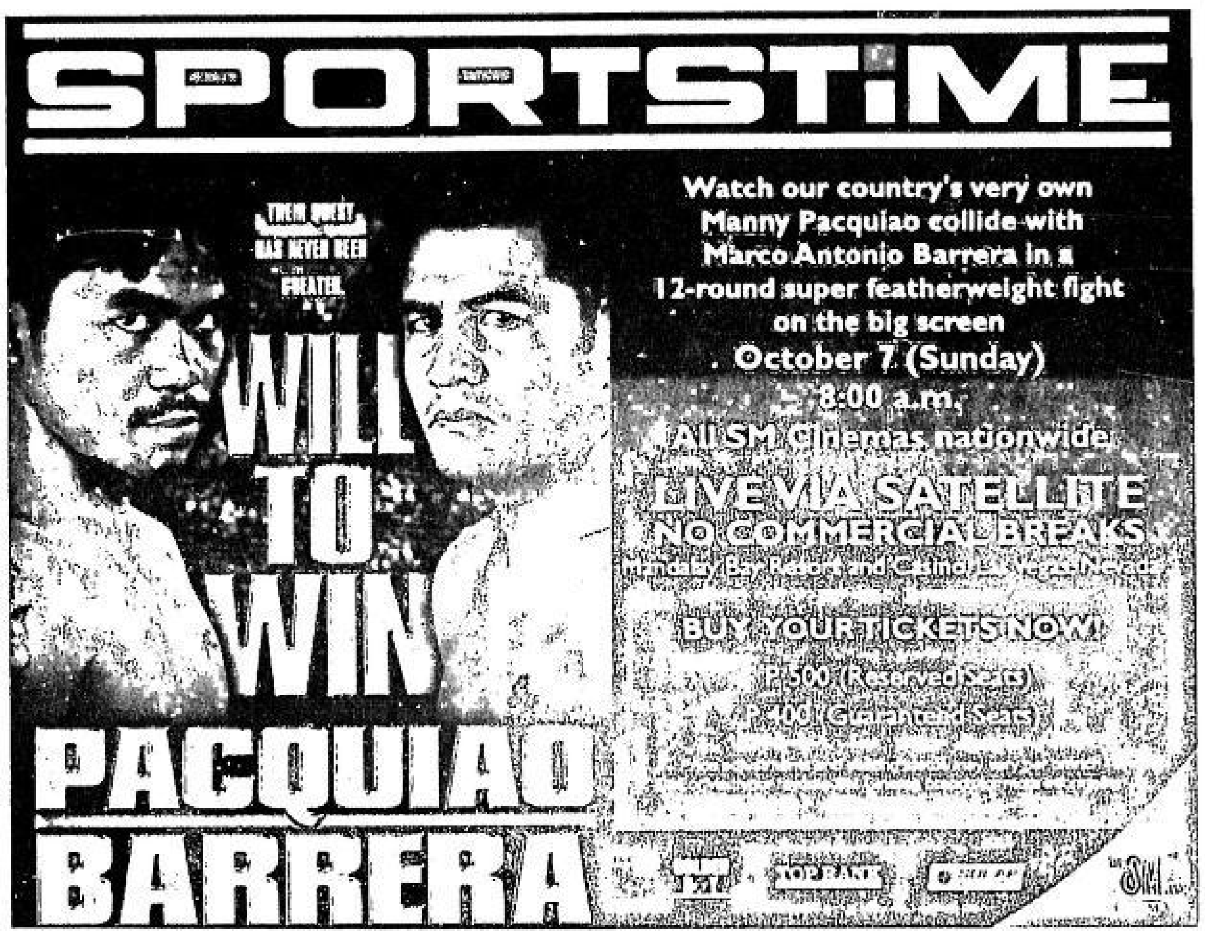


THE MODEL is also a radio jock, dancer and photographer.

And despite all the negative publicity the country has been getting in international media, "it is a wonderful country to visit," she added.

Nadia brings with her to Tokyo encouragement from her fellow Binibining Pilipinas beauties. Anna Theresa Licaros, Miss Universe 2007 Miss Photogenic, said, "Believe in yourself and have fun." Miss World 2007 delegate Margaret Wilson added, "I'm proud of you. I know you can do it!"

Miss International's theme for this year is building a harmonious world, with focus on environmental awareness.



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2 NO RESERVATIONS
3 UNDERDOG/THE BRAVE ONE
4 ROGUE ASSASSIN
5 DECEMBER BOYS
6 WEDDING DAZE
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5 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
6 RESIDENT EVIL
7 ROGUE ASSASSIN
8 DECEMBER BOYS
9 UNDERDOG
10 1408
11 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
12 RUSH HOUR 3

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1 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
2 DECEMBER BOYS
3 RESIDENT EVIL
4 ROGUE ASSASSIN
5 WEDDING DAZE
6 NO RESERVATIONS
7 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
8 1408
9 THE BRAVE ONE
10 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
11 SHOOT EM' UP
12 RUSH HOUR 3

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749
1 UNDERDOG
2 NO RESERVATIONS
3 A LOVE STORY
4 ROGUE ASSASSIN
5 THE BRAVE ONE
6 SHOOT EM' UP
7 RESIDENT EVIL
8 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
9 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
10 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
11 WEDDING DAZE
12 HOST/1408

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416
1 RESIDENT EVIL
2 NO RESERVATION
3 WEDDING DAZE
4 ROGUE ASSASSIN
5 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
6 UNDERDOG
7 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
8 1408
9 SHOOT EM' UP
10 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488
1 RESIDENT EVIL
2 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
3 ROGUE ASSASSIN
4 WEDDING DAZE
5 NO RESERVATION
6 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU

SM SOUTHMALL 806-6888
1 DECEMBER BOYS
2 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
3 RESIDENT EVIL
4 ROGUE ASSASSIN
5 WEDDING DAZE
6 NO RESERVATION
7 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
8 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
9 SHOOT EM' UP

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055
1 RESIDENT EVIL
2 NO RESERVATION
3 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
4 ROGUE ASSASSIN

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240
1 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
2 WEDDING DAZE
3 DECEMBER BOYS
4 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
5 NO RESERVATION
6 RESIDENT EVIL
7 ROGUE ASSASSIN
8 DISTURBIA
9 1408
10 RUSH HOUR 3
11 UNDERDOG
12 SHOOT EM' UP

SM CITY DASMARINAS (046)4323201-04
1 RESIDENT EVIL
2 THE HOST
3 DON'T LOOK BACK
4 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917
1 RESIDENT EVIL
2 NO RESERVATION
3 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
4 THE HOST

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975
1 NO RESERVATION
2 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
3 RESIDENT EVIL
4 ROGUE ASSASSIN

SM CITY BACOOR (046)417-3868
1 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
2 RESIDENT EVIL
3 RESIDENT EVIL
4 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
5 ROGUE ASSASSIN
6 NO RESERVATIONS
7 DAY WATCH
8 WEDDING DAZE

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45
1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
2 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
3 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK AND LARRY
4 BRATZ
5 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
6 RUSH HOUR 3/OSS 117

SM CITY MARILAO (044)9332013-17
1 SINKING OF JAPAN
2 THE BRAVE ONE
3 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
4 THE LAST LEGION

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SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04
1 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
2 BRATZ
3 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
4 THE HOST

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1 SKINWALKERS
2 BRATZ
3 ROGUE ASSASSIN
4 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
5 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK AND LARRY
6 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU

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1 BRATZ
2 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
3 SHOOT EM' UP
4 DAYWATCH

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80
1 THE BRAVE ONE
2 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
3 THE LAST LEGION
4 ZOMBIES

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1 THE BRAVE ONE
2 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
3 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
4 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK AND LARRY

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2 RESIDENT EVIL
3 ROGUE ASSASSIN
4 BRATZ

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1 BLIND DATING
2 SKINWALKERS
3 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
4 ROGUE ASSASSIN

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998
1 RESIDENT EVIL
2 ROGUE ASSASSIN
3 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
4 SINKING OF JAPAN
5 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
6 THE BRAVE ONE

SM CITY CAGAYAN (088)859-2884
1 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
2 ROGUE ASSASSIN
3 THREE
4 HAIRSPRAY

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422
1 BRATZ
2 **RESERVED**
3 THE LAST LEGION
4 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
5 NANCY DREW
6 ROGUE ASSASSIN
7 **RESERVED**
8 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876
1 RESIDENT EVIL
2 HAIRSPRAY
3 DAYWATCH
4 THE BRAVE ONE
5 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU, CHUCK AND LARRY
6 ROGUE ASSASSIN
7 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
8 RESIDENT EVIL

SM CITY BACOLOD (034) 708 1010
1 THE BRAVE ONE
2 THE LAST LEGION
3 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
4 ROGUE ASSASSIN

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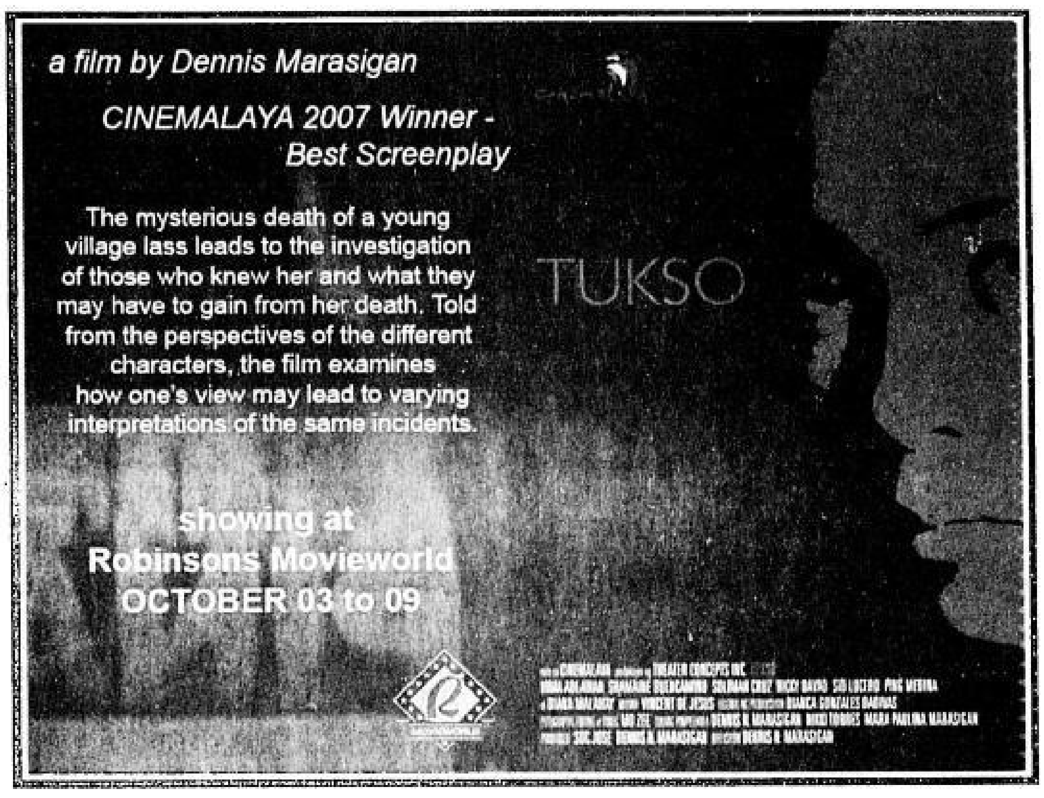
FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MOVIE LISTING, MTRCB RATING, SCREENING SCHEDULES AND THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AT SM CINEMA



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EVENING 1:15/3:50/6:25/9:00
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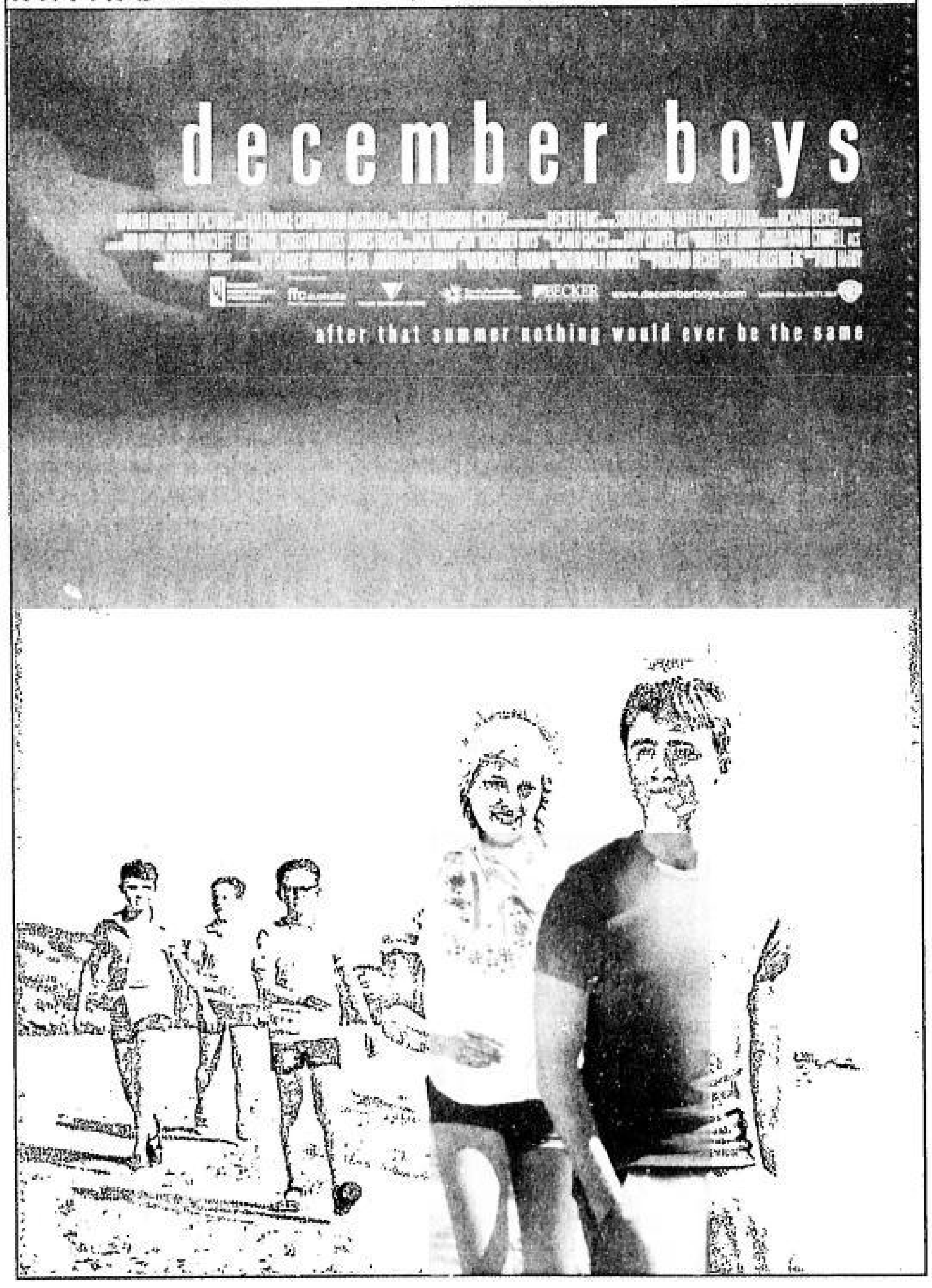

december boys
www.decemberboys.com
after that summer nothing would ever be the same

OPENING TODAY

From page D1

Roger Ebert of Chicago Sun-Times agrees: "[It] creeps through its dolorous paces as prudently as an undertaker."

December Boys

Stars Daniel Radcliffe, Teresa Palmers, Judi Farr, Lee Cormie

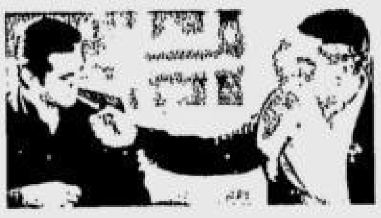
Directed by Rod Hardy

Adapted from Michael Noonan's 1963 novel, this summer reverie follows four orphans growing up in the Australian outback. David Wiegand of San Francisco Chronicle says it's "uplifting … [but] oversaturated with sweetness and light." Desson Thomson of Washington Post dismisses it as "texturally uneven." Kirk Honeycutt of The Hollywood Reporter asserts: "Dramatic moments are small but exquisitely rendered."

Harsh Times

Stars Christian Bale, Eva Longoria, Freddy Rodriguez, J.K. Simmons

Directed by David Ayer

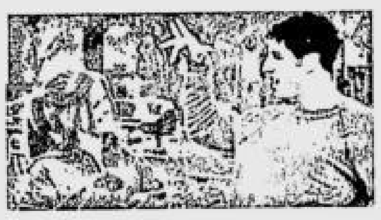


A former soldier (Bale) embarks on a journey of self-destruction on the mean streets of L.A. Stephen Holden of New York Times rants that by the time it "builds to a melodramatic finale, it has worn out [the viewer's] patience." Jim Ridley of Village Voice says: "Whatever political statement … is swamped by obnoxious badass envy." David Edwards of Daily Mirror hails it as "bleak, black but brilliant." Exclusively at Ayala Malls.

Wedding Daze

Stars Jason Biggs, Isla Fisher, Joe Pantoliano, Mark Consuelos

Directed by Michael Ian Black



On a dare, a lovelorn guy (Biggs) proposes to a waitress (Fisher) to get over a heartache. Helen O'Hara of Empire mag states that this flick, originally titled "The Pleasure of Your Company," is "predictable but truly charming in places." David Nusair of Reel Film Reviews raves that it's "an irreverent, sporadically hilarious, affable romantic comedy." Eddie Cockrell of Variety disagrees: It's "gratingly laborious."

Unusual TV shows catch viewers' kooky fancy

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

MOST TELEVISION PROGRAMS adhere to standard formats and production styles, but a few offer unusual fillips to catch venturesome viewers' fancy.

There's "Distribution," a quiz and game show with a difference: It subjects contestants to indignities and even painful conditions like answering questions while twisting scores of rubber bands tightly around their faces. Not only are they in pain, they also end up looking like prizefighters after a particularly vicious boxing match.

Even after a winner is proclaimed, the show doesn't run out of assaults. The winner of a car still has to "defend" his prize by answering more questions correctly. For every incorrect reply, a part of his car is smashed, or painted over in an ugly hue.

Sadistic bent

Why do contestants subject themselves to such torments? They must either be masochists or nerds in dire need of attention, no matter how extreme. Whatever the reason, the show doesn't lack for prospective contestants who are bent on being "distracted."

"Wow Mali Bites" also subjects people to indignities, but they're more of the *psychologically* painful sort. The show's resident pranksters sometimes accost hapless passersby and scare or humiliate them to the max—and then expect them to be "good sports" after the ordeal is over.

This sadistic bent is taken even further by the "The Jamie Kennedy Experiment." The reality show passes itself off as a social experiment, determining how much stress a person can take before buckling.

At the last possible second, just as its "victim" is about to lose it, he's told that he's just been "X-ed." Poor chump, now he also has to grin and bear it for the TV cameras to show that he's a "good sport."

The "Noypi" show is more credible as a social experiment. It does place clueless people in unusual situations—but not for sadistic "entertainment." The program is genuinely interested in finding out how Filipinos react to different situations that test their values—not in theory, but in action.

We like watching this program, because it teaches us how the Filipino psyche really operates—and why. On one particularly eye-opening telecast, Filipinos' "kindness factor" was tested by having a man go from house to house, asking for a drink of water.

Quite a number of people chose to help, and a couple of families even came out to talk to the "kindness searcher" and also gave him a sandwich to assuage his perceived hunger.

Incidentally, **Ellen Degeneres** recently conducted a similar "experiment" on her daily talk show. In disguise, she pushed a big sofa on a sidewalk and asked passersby to help her.

What do you know? Most people ignored her obvious difficulty and sauntered on.

Pinoys get a bad rap for many failings these days, so it's great to see that, when it comes to basics like helping others, they come out on tap—and smelling like roses.

'Parental Control'

At 6 p.m. Monday to Friday on the ETC channel, "Parental Control" shows what happens when parents are allowed to pick dates for their kids, so the "obnoxious" boyfriends or girlfriends they hate can be replaced with "better" prospects more to the parents' liking.

OPENS TODAY

KATIE AND ANDERSON ARE GETTING MARRIED...
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ISLA FISHER

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WEDDING DAZE	RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION R13	DECEMBER BOYS PG13
EVENING	I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY - R13	NO RESERVATIONS G

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SHANG CINEPLEX

① DECEMBER BOYS MTRCB: PG-13 12:20, 2:45, 5:10, 7:35, 10:00
② NO RESERVATIONS MTRCB: GP
③ CHUCK & LARRY (R-13) AUSTRALIAN FILM FEST (SUBJECT TO MTRCB RATING)
④ WEDDING DAZE (SUBJECT TO MTRCB RATING)

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Love Serenade	4:00 pm
Harvie Krumpet (Short film)	7:00 pm
Look Both Ways	7:00 pm
Cracker Bag (Short film)	9:00 pm
Floating Life	9:00 pm
October 4 (Thursday)	
Australian Rules	4:00 pm
Breathe (Short film)	7:00 pm
Caterpillar Wish	7:00 pm
Cool White (Short film)	9:00 pm
Japanese Story	9:00 pm
October 5 (Friday)	
Looking for Alibrandi	4:00 pm
Harvie Krumpet (Short film)	7:00 pm
Jindabyne	7:00 pm
Cracker Bag (Short film)	9:00 pm
Lantana	9:00 pm
October 6 (Saturday)	
Looking for Alibrandi	2:00 pm
Australian Rules	4:00 pm
Breathe (Short Film)	7:00 pm
Look Both Ways	7:00 pm
Floating Life	9:00 pm
October 7 (Sunday)	
Love Serenade	2:00 pm
Japanese Story	4:00 pm
Cool White (Short film)	7:00 pm
Caterpillar Wish	7:00 pm
Lantana	9:00 pm

ADMISSION FEE is P50.00

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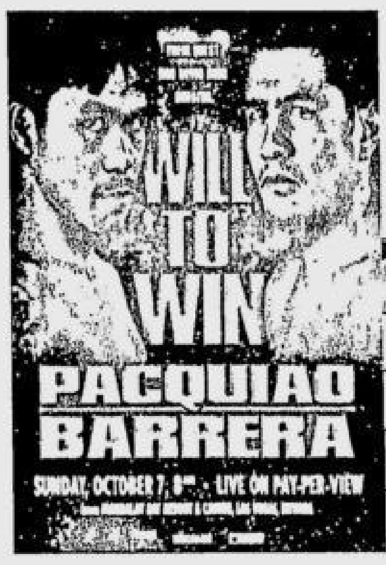

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C4	I Now Pronounce You Chuck And Larry

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CINEMA 5 WEDDING DAZE PG-13

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MUSIC MUSEUM	October 08 & 09, 2007	" Alamat " Stageplay	3:00 PM 1:00 & 6:00 PM
	October 12 & 13, 2007	Apo Hiking Society	8:00 PM
TEATRINO	Oct. 3, 10, 17 24 & 31	Cerrudo Classico	8:00 PM
	October 25, 2007	Ogie Alcasid	8:00 PM
	October 26, 2007	John Lesaca	8:00 PM

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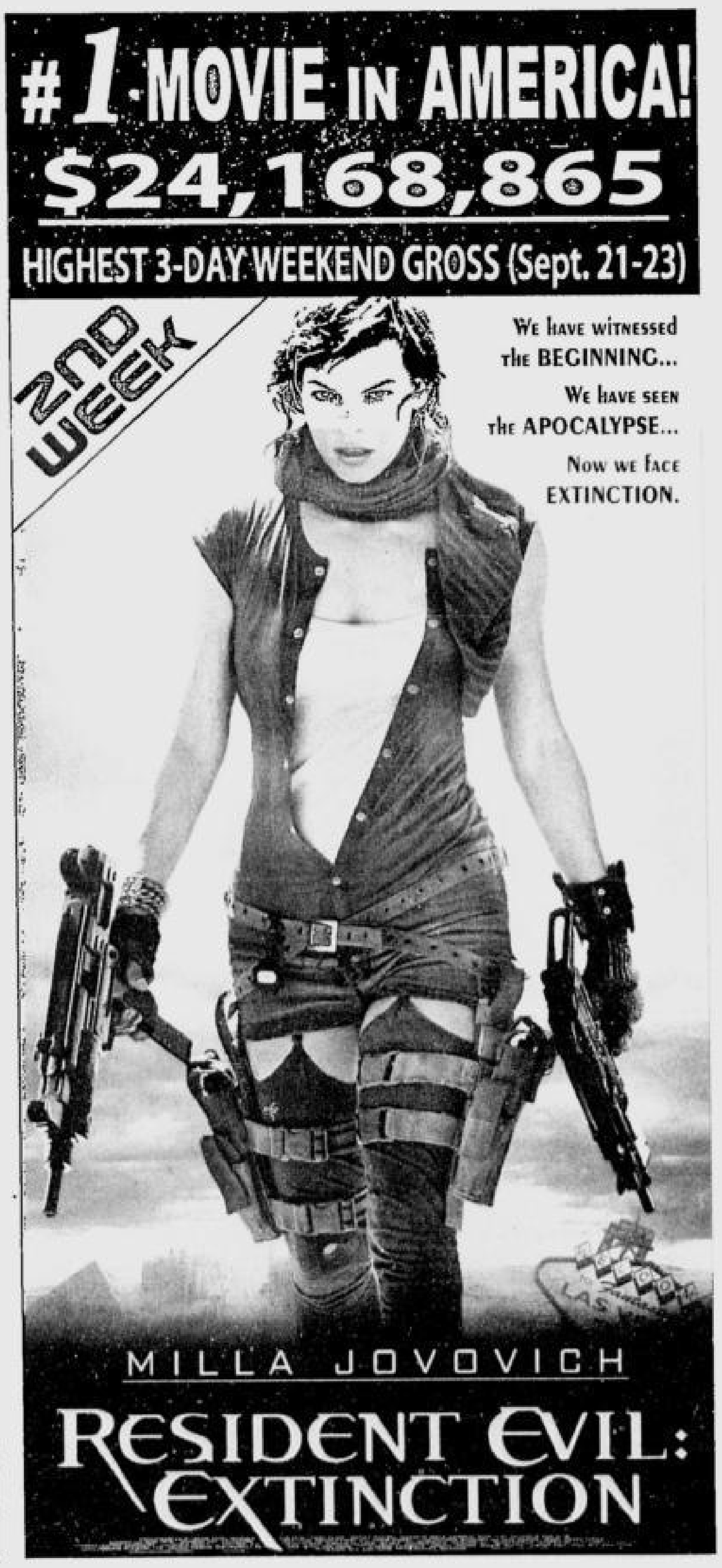

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MILLA JOVOVICH
RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION

A marked man

TAKE FIVE

Billy Crawford counts his tattoos and girlfriends, and unleashes a mouthful on the network wars

By Bayani San Diego Jr.
and the Inquirer Entertainment Staff
Photos by Jim Guiao Punzalan

HIS BODY IS A WONDERland … of tattoos.

He lifts his sleeves to reveal painted arms, and elicits a wave of oohs and aahs.

International singer Billy Crawford admits it isn't the reaction he expected. For one, he explains, Ilongga mom Marietta is not a big fan of his "tats"; in fact, she's trying to prevent the expansion of his body art.

Marked man is … a mama's boy? Not exactly, though in *that* sense, Billy, a superstar in Europe—has remained thoroughly Pinoy.

Plus, says mom, he speaks Tagalog fluently "He even knows how to speak Visayan."

Mom accompanied him to France the first time he moved there when he was 17.

He recalls that he had a ball speaking in Tagalog with her, "knowing that no one could understand us." He's also his fun-loving Texan dad's son, he points out.

He's done hundreds of concerts, but dad Jack will be watching him for the first time on Saturday at the Araneta Coliseum for his solo show, "It's Time."

Also in the audience will be US producers (checking him out for a possible world tour), but he seems more excited about having his parents there.

What did you notice about local talents?

There are so many! I can't describe how good they are. Like, the young dancers [who won on his GMA 7 talent search "Move"] are newcomers, but they improve more quickly than most pros I've worked with.

It's because they're still hungry. They have this passion for dancing. They rehearse until the wee hours. My concert director Bambi Cruz, who's from France, is amazed at the [abundance] of talents. It's only the work style that he's a bit uneasy with.

What did you learn from performing abroad?

I learned to be professional and punctual. Also to perfect [my] strengths and disregard weaknesses. Here, actors and actresses are made to sing, dance, act … everything. There are a lot of last-minute changes. A song is scrapped right before a show. The script would arrive last minute.

Some people thrive in the pressure, but newcomers suffer.

Do you think it stunts the development of local artists?

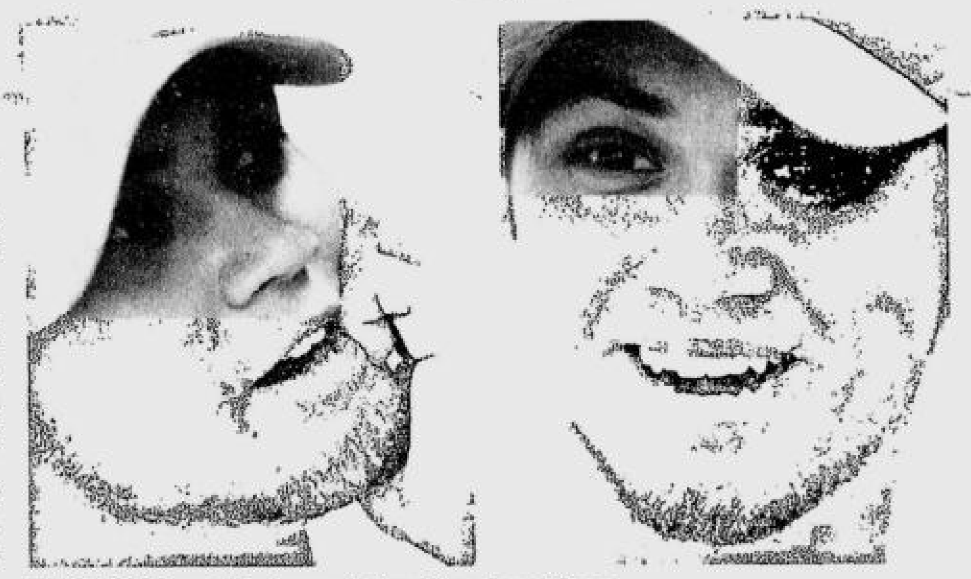
Kawawa ang artista. Naaawa rin ako sa public. Instead of supporting artists, the public is really supporting the networks. There's even such a thing as network wars. When I was growing up on [GMA 7's] "That's Entertainment," we could move from one station to another … guest in the other channels to promote our projects. That was why the industry was so much bigger. Now, there are limitations. But that's okay. Business is business.

If someone asks your opinion on how to run things, would you give it?

I wouldn't tell anyone how to run things. But as an artist, I'd like to work with different people. I want to perform for everyone, not just a limited audience. [Otherwise] we can't grow as artists.

How much of your talents have you been allowed to show here, considering the limitations?

I'm limited to one channel [GMA 7] for now. But people are noticing *naman*.



HE'S HAD four to five long relationships, he confesses.

Speaking of noticing … How many tattoos do you have?

Hah! My right and left arms are full of tats. (He counts.) Five.

There's a map of the Philippines.

Yes, of course. That's important. All my tattoos tell a story.

On my right arm is the name of my company YPMP Productions. It says Yea Pimp … Also on the right arm is a Polynesian design representing music, protection, anger, softness. The lizard has my initials on it. On my left arm is an angel with a microphone and the world in her hands. There's also a space cowboy who represents my father. The Philippine map symbolizes my mom. There's also a quote, written in [the ancient Philippine language] *alibata*. It says: "*Isang buhay, maraming pangarap.*"

Where did you have them made?

All done in France, except for the gecko, which I got on Bora-Bora.

Do you wish to add to your tattoo collection?

I really want some more … it can be addictive. I want to do my entire back, but my mom is not happy about my tattoos. *Nahihiya na ako sa kanya.*

What did you learn from "That's Entertainment"?

"That's" was my foundation. I started when I was 4 and stayed until I was almost 12. I learned everything on that show: Performing, hosting, acting, getting along with others.

With what group were you then?

Tuesday Group. With Jestoni Alarcon, Rita Avila, Jean Garcia, Manilyn Reynes, Janno Gibbs, Judy Ann Santos, Anna Roces.

What happens when you bump into your old "That's" castmates?

I just saw Jeffrey Santos, Brylle Mondejar and Jigo Garcia recently. *Nagkataon.* [But] we try to keep in touch. Once, they brought old photo albums filled with pictures from our group outings. I was always the butt of jokes since I was the youngest. They used to kid me about my hairdo: The apple cut.

How do you feel when you see your old pictures?

I laugh because at times I was wearing the same outfit as Kuya Germs [Moreno]. *Terno kami.*

Kuya Germs' Mini-Me.

Mini-German. Hahaha!

But he loves you.

He's my *tatay*. He has helped a lot of people in the industry.

How were you discovered?

When I was four, I watched "That's" in the old GMA 7 studio along Edsa. Niño Muhlach pulled me out of the crowd. *Natuwa siguro siya.* Kuya Germs was surprised that there was a kid onstage. He asked if I could sing. I belted out "Born in the USA"—a lie because I was born here.

What did you learn from doing "Dominion: Prequel to the Exorcist"?

That was tough. The funny thing was, we shot in the same studio (Cinecittà in Italy) as "The Passion of the Christ." One day, you'd see Jesus (Jim Caviezel) and the devil, me, on the same lot. The hardest part was working with experienced actors. Some were method actors. One guy was so into method that I actually thought he was a real priest. He seldom came out of his room, which looked like a shrine. On my first day, the director, Mr. Paul Schrader, pulled me aside and said: "I don't know what you do. I don't care what you've done. You have to prove yourself in this film."

After the shoot, the movie encountered problems.

The director and the producers didn't get along. [Producer] James Robinson wanted a commercial movie, but the director hated gore. So the producers made another movie with some of the same actors for another $40 million. It didn't do very well. Then my film "Dominion" was released on DVD and in selected theaters, and we got better reviews.

That didn't discourage you about Hollywood?

Definitely not. I just got an offer to do a dance film called "Back Down." Also, I was supposed to read for a film with Whoopi Goldberg. But it got pushed back … and I need to move on.

You mentioned artistic hunger, are you still hungry?

Of course. I'm [only 25]. I've achieved a lot, but there's always something new to excel in.

What are your goals?

I want to have an established production company. I want to write and produce songs for other people. Maybe do films.

Where are you based now?

Los Angeles, for now. I spent five years in Paris, one year in London. I'm supposed to go back to LA after the concert, to finish my fourth album [under MCA], "BC S.T.A.T.U.S." But I love it here.

What do you miss and not miss about the Philippines?

Everything … except for Filipino time. Hahaha. And the last-minute calls.

Even the *chismis*?

Chismis is *chismis*. Even in our own families, there's gossip. I don't pay attention anymore.

Speaking of which, what did you learn from the whole who's-the-better-kisser-Mandy Moore-or-KC Concepcion controversy?

If you make a bad decision, there's a consequence. [Answering that question] had a bad consequence. I'm now going to put a Ziploc on my mouth.

KC admitted that you had courted her.

Who wouldn't court her? She's a crush *ng bayan*. She's a sweet girl. But I don't want to comment anymore.

Does Mandy Moore know about that intrigue?

I think I should be the first one to see her when she arrives next month [for a concert]. I'll pick her up at the airport and talk to her before anyone else does (laughs). She's very sweet, too. I was kinda like her first boyfriend.

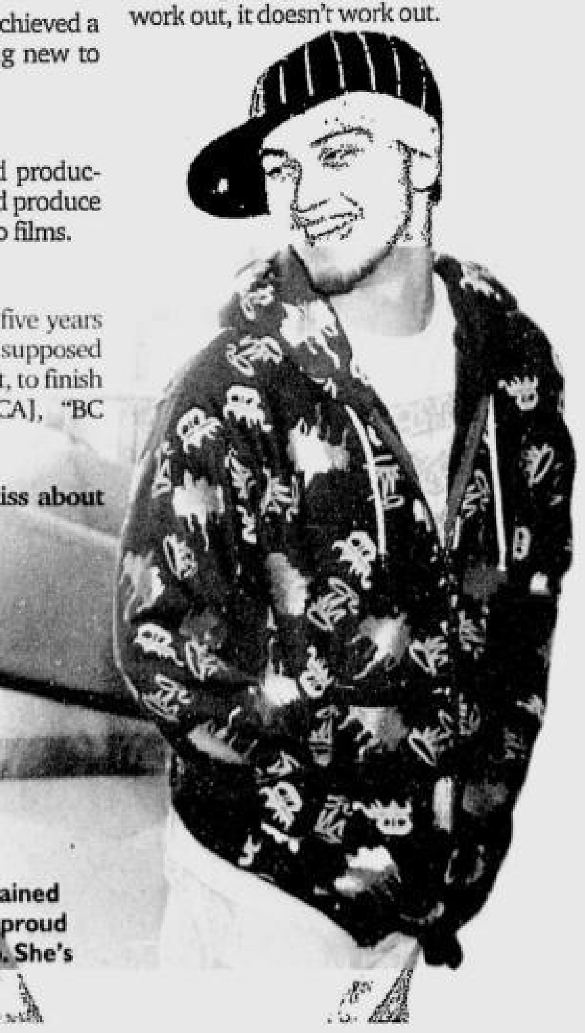
How many girlfriends have you had?

I've had four to five long relationships.

How long was the longest?

Three and a half years. I am definitely into long relationships. But if it doesn't work out, it doesn't work out.

HE GOT the gecko on Bora-Bora; the rest of the Polynesian tattoos, in France.



THE EURO superstar has remained close to mom Marietta, who's proud that he can speak Visayan, too. She's no fan of his body art, though.

What Snooky Serna needs now

JM GUIAO PUNZALAN

SNOOKY Serna

APPARENTLY, NOT ANOTHER INTERview—on TV, radio or print.

Her latest conflict started on DJ Mo's radio show. Asked by the shock jock how she lost her virginity, she said she was only 14... and then the shocker... she had been "raped."

GMA 7's "Showbiz Central" immediately booked the ex-child star for a tell-all Q&A.

But Snooky refused to go into "graphic details," on account of her two daughters. So why grant the interview at all?

Host John Lapus insisted it was to help other victims. Then why was he persistent about revealing the identity of the supposed assailant?

"Was he a leading man or an actor who played your father?" "Where did it happen?"

Snooky threatened to walk out. That line of questioning wasn't part of the deal, she exclaimed on air. Later she answered one of the supposedly offensive questions just the same.

Alas, the alleged crime happened "*sa bahay*," Snooky said. In the end, she warned other young women: 'Just because a man is handsome or looks gentle, doesn't mean he's not [capable of] rape."

Another can of worms?

CHRISTIAN Bautista RUDY ESPERAS

FIRST EVER. Actress Emma Watson wins the award for Best Performance - Female at the first ever National Movie Awards at the Royal Festival Hall in London Sept. 28. REUTERS

Sexy swindlers

Two sexy actresses—siblings *pa*, one employed by ABS-CBN, the other by GMA 7—flew to Singapore, reportedly to escape jewellers after them for estafa.

DENNIS Trillo

RUSHES

No 'Rush Hour' fan

HONG KONG— It's the movie that put Jackie Chan in the major league in the US, but the Hong Kong star isn't a fan of "Rush Hour."

Chan said he made the first installment of the series in 1998 only to test the US market.

In a blog entry on his website seen Sunday, he said: "When we finished filming, I felt very disappointed... I didn't appreciate [it] and I did not like the action scenes... too Americanized... I didn't understand American humor." *AP*

***

Top of the talk shows:

For those who missed last weekend's showbiz gab fests:

- Dennis Trillo on the name tag "Baby Ho" on the nursery crib of former beauty queen Carlene Aguilar's newborn Calix Andrea:

"*Nararapat lang... na gamitin 'yung apelyido ko...* baby *ko naman 'yun eh.*"

- Clarifying his relationship with Carlene:

"*Matagal ko siya naging* girlfriend, four or five years... *bago pa ako pumasok sa* GMA... *Ngayon bihira na kami makapag-usap... medyo malabo ang sitwasyon... dahil naging komplikado 'yung mga bagay-bagay kaya medyo, wala, malabo. (Ang labo nga yata.)*

Love this guy... er, gay

- Rustom Padilla on facing ex-wife Carmina Villaroel since revealing his sexuality:

"*Siya 'yung bukod-tanging, isang taong kinausap ko bago ako nag-*out on television... *Hindi* melo-dramatic *ang pag-uusap namin*. In fact, it was funny, very touching. We don't bump into each other [now] but I'm sure it would be okay [if we did]." (If only straight men were this sensitive, too! Or is that too much to ask?)

- Paolo Contis, asked if he might do as Dingdong Dantes has done, posing sexy on magazine covers and catwalks:

"*Darating naman 'yun... kumbaga* right timing, right offer. Sina Dingdong... *nag*-topless. *Handa ako*, bottomless. *Pero may damit sa itaas.*" (Uh, did we get that right?)

Friends, not weird

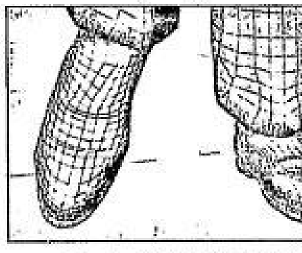
- Christian Bautista, asked if he would sing "Lupang Hinirang" in public again after forgetting some lines at the start a boxing match:

"If they ask me to... I will sing it with all my heart. I will not be terrified. Be proud of it. Learn it. Know it by heart. *Kasi nga*, as singers that's our role." (No, no, the point was...)

- Christian on rumors of a relationship with Piolo Pascual:

"That's not true *na* we are doing something

WHAT SNOOKY/ E4



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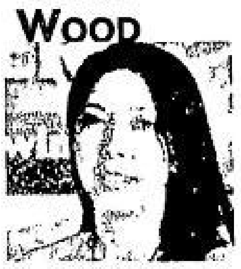
Cesar has three new projects with ABS-CBN

DOLLY WOOD



Dolly Anne Carvajal

IT'S ALWAYS A DELIGHT TO HANG OUT with *mi amigo muy simpatico* **Cesar Montano** at his cool Italian bistro Bellisimo (Sct. Castor, Quezon City). His works of art, which are for sale, adorn the walls. Next to acting and directing, painting is Buboy's passion.

"I am excited about my three new projects in ABS-CBN—a remake of "Palos," a boxing reality TV show and a still untitled show," he told me over dinner. "Aside from that, I am directing an indie film, 'Inflagrante Delicto,' which means 'caught in the act.'"

Even his wife, **Sunshine Cruz**, is busy with TV shows. She's one of Buboy's leading ladies and she will also do a soap with **Maricel Soriano** and **Ai-Ai de las Alas** titled "Naga Aida" to be shot in Japan.

I teased him, "It's good you allowed Shine to resume her career. Won't you get jealous anymore if she has other leading men?"

Buboy laughed. "*Basta ako lang ang may* kissing scene. *Siya bawal!* And she has to be home by midnight. Okay *na rin na* she'll be working *para di niya ako kulitin masyado sa lambing niyang mga pagseselos.*"

He and Shine are enjoying their three daughters. "*Nakakatuwa* to see their personalities develop. Our second child *may pagka* weird *na* artistic," the doting dad said.

His other daughter Angela, who runs their resto with her hubby as bartender, told me that Buboy refuses to be called "lolo."

Rightfully so! He definitely does not look like a granddad yet. He's just a *grand* actor.

No surprise

I wasn't a bit surprised when **Dennis Trillo** finally admitted that he's the dad of **Carlene Aguilar**'s baby boy. He's too much of a gentleman to deny such matters. Although he said on TV that he and Carlene were no longer a couple, the birth of **Calex** could pave the way for a reconciliation. Or do they have an agreement to keep their relationship low-key, so it doesn't go off-key with too much intrigue?

Budding romance

The sensational love team of **Mart Escudero** and **Jennica Garcia** will be launched via Regal Entertainment's heart-pounding movie "Hide and Seek" (opens Oct. 31). As **Mother Lily** says, "The more you hide, the more ghosts will seek you." Aside from her gut feel for what makes a great horror movie, Mother also has a sixth sense.

Jennica reminds me so much of her mom Jean. We used to hang out when she was still dating Jennica's dad, **Jigo Garcia**.

Will her budding romance with Mart go the same way as her parents' tender love story during their "That's Entertainment" days? Or will their hearts play hide and seek?

Humbling experience

I'm happy for **Shyr Valdez** who's back in the scene with Wild Eyes Productions' TV movie "Search & Destroy," which will be shown in the History Channel in the US next week. It's about the tragic abduction of **Gracia** and **Martin Burnham** in Palawan.

Shyr's portrayal of Gracia was a life-changing experience for her. "It made me realize cruelty in its highest form," she says. "Reenacting Gracia's ordeal humbled me and made me thankful that none of my loved ones ever experienced such inhuman acts."

In show biz parlance, Shyr Valdez is no "Luz Valdez" (loser) with this comeback project of hers.

From Princess

Here are portions of my "Sis" **Princess Punzalan**'s e-mail to me from the US:

Dear Doll,

I live in Connecticut now. Just a train ride to NY. *Dun na kasi nagtatrabaho ang asawa ko. Balik eskuwela naman ako. Hay, ang hirap ng tumatanda, mas mahirap sumabay sa mga bagets na* fresh *pa ang mga utak! Hay naku... Totoo ka... Iba ang ikot ng mundo ko dito ngayon.* (*Minsan*, I miss having house help, *lalo na pag* super *ngarag ako sa kakaaral.*) *Wala pa kaming anak* but we're still hopeful that someday God will bless us with at least one.

Mwah!
Cess

Celebs' choice

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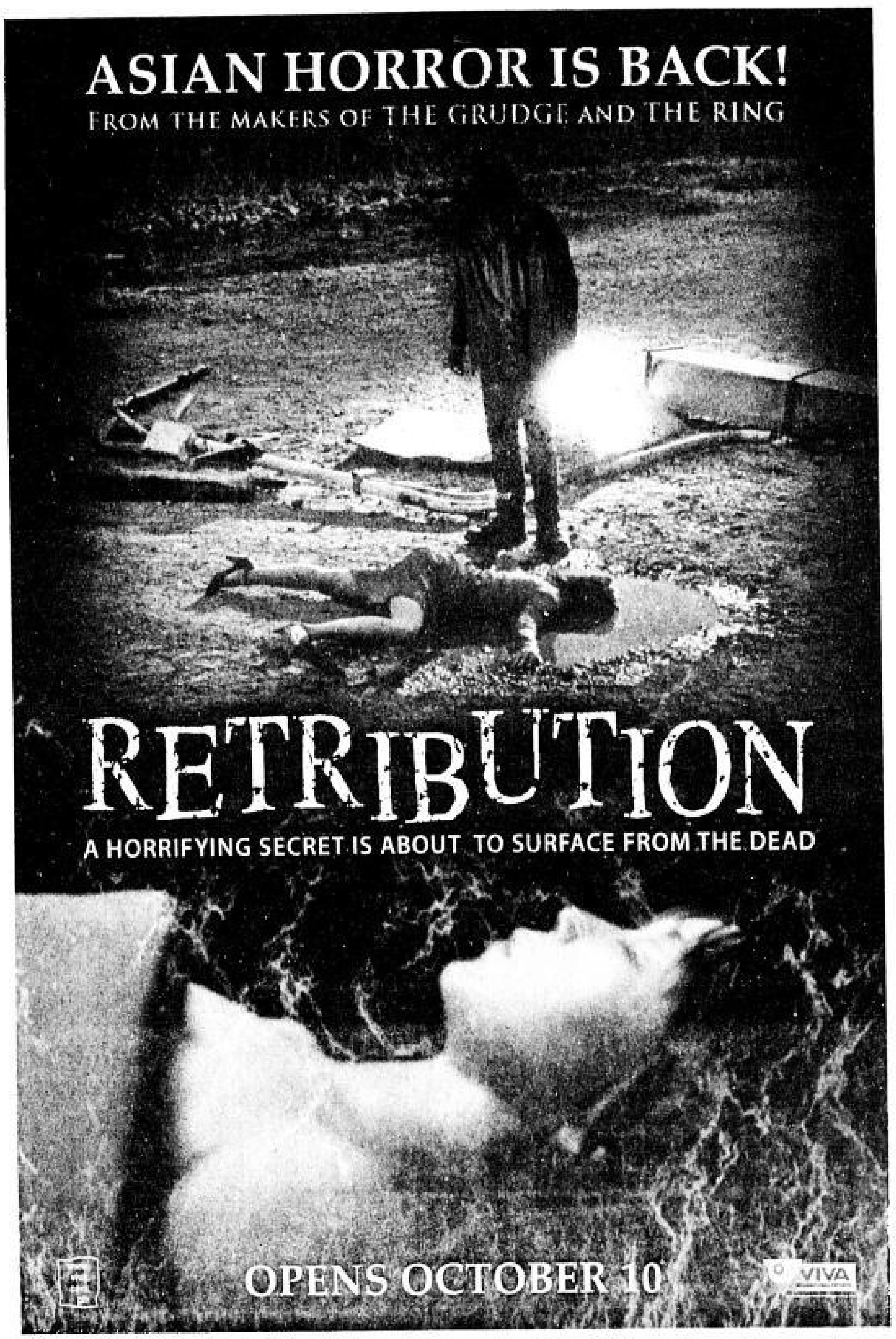
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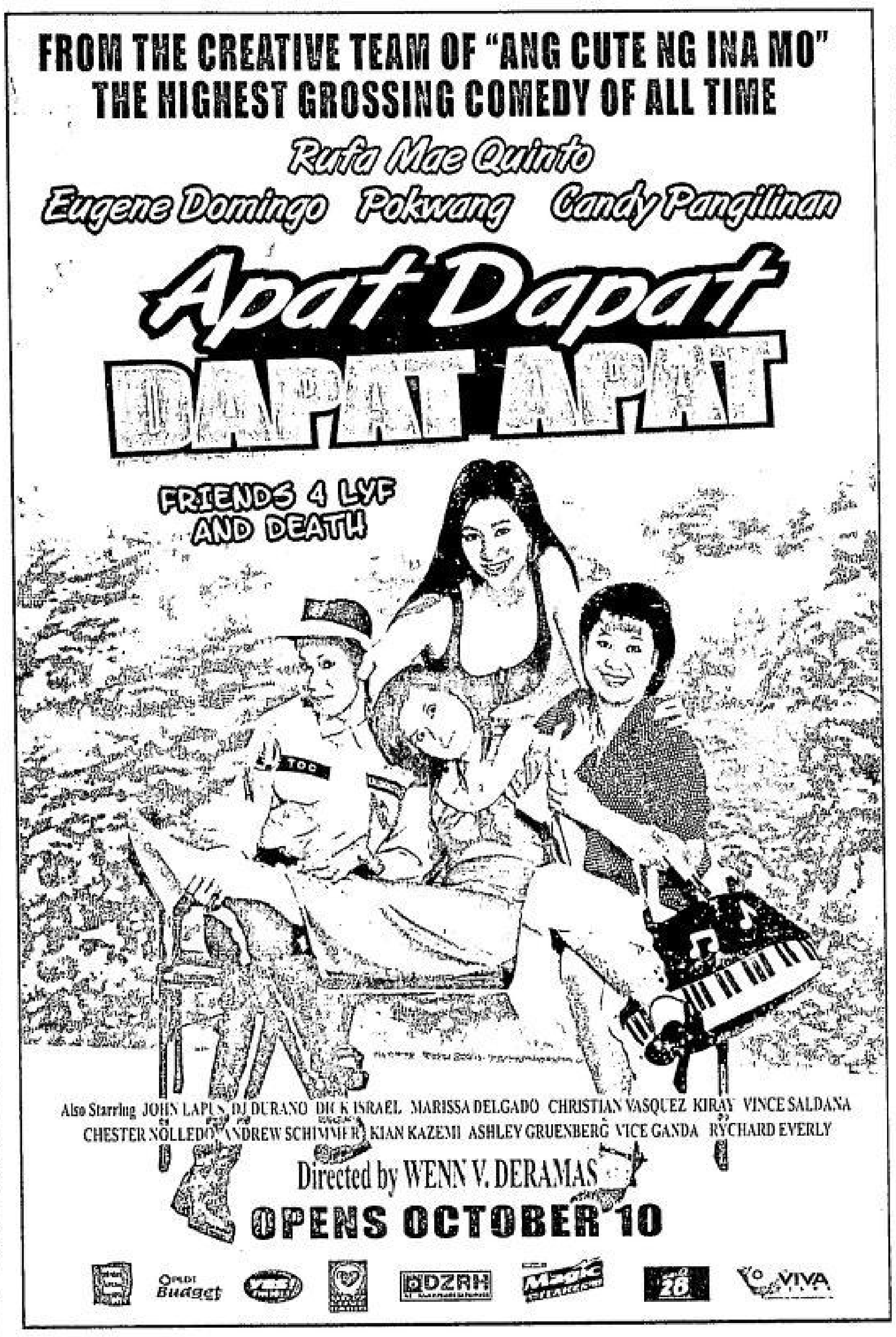
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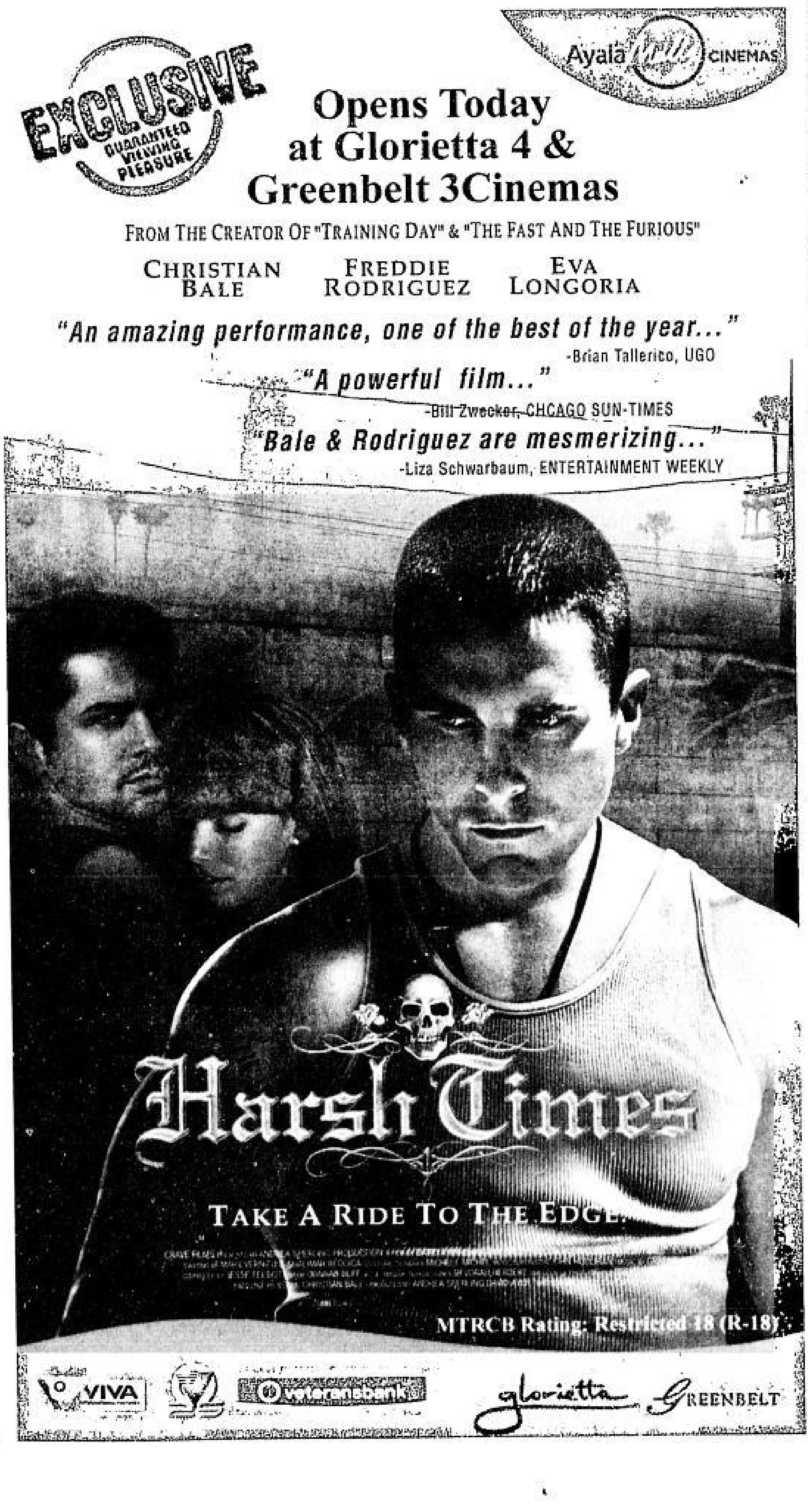
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WEEKEND BOX OFFICE

Top 10 movies at the North American box office for the three-day weekend beginning September 28

The Game Plan, Walt aDisney Pictures

TW	LW	Title	Gross	WR
1	☆	The Game Plan	$22.7 mln	1
2	☆	The Kingdom	$17.7 mln	1
3	1	Resident Evil: Extinction	$8.0 mln	2
4	2	Good Luck, Chuck	$6.3 mln	2
5	4	3:10 to Yuma	$4.2 mln	4
6	3	The Brave One	$3.8 mln	3
7	7	Mr. Woodcock	$3.0 mln	3
8	5	Eastern Promises	$2.9 mln	3
9	6	Sydney White	$2.7 mln	2
10	13	Across the Universe	$2.1 mln	3

This Week, Last Week — Weeks in Release

☆ New release

Based on studio estimates compiled on Sunday

REUTERS

OPENS OCTOBER 10

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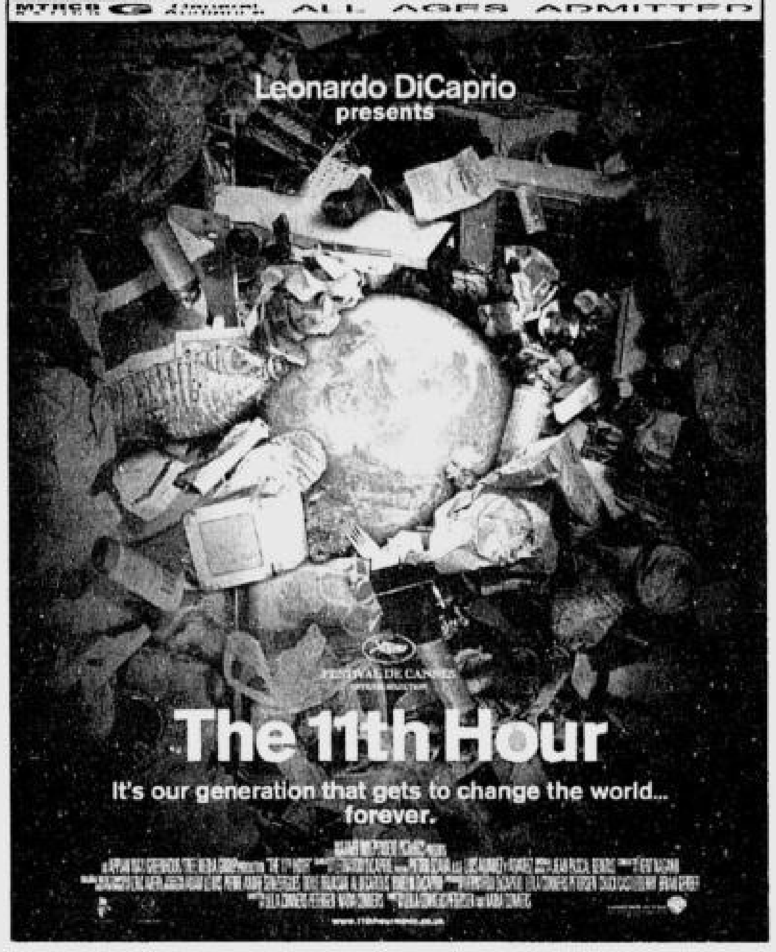
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10 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU

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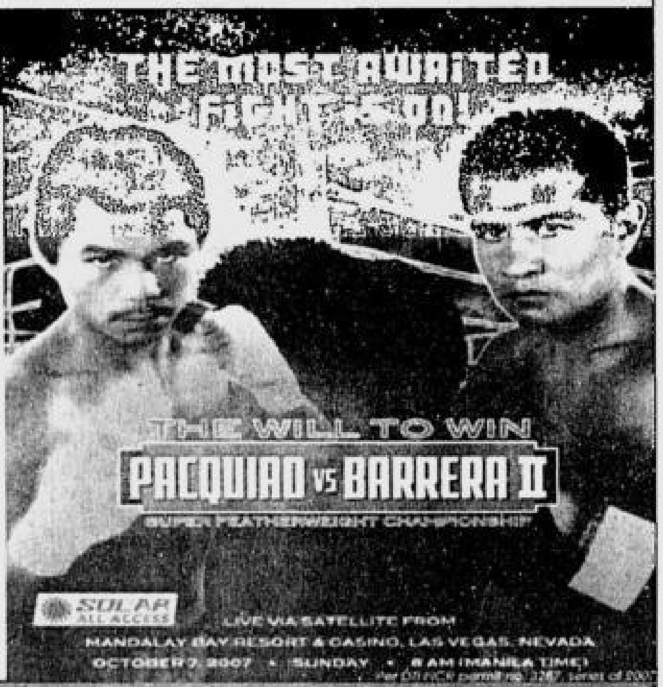
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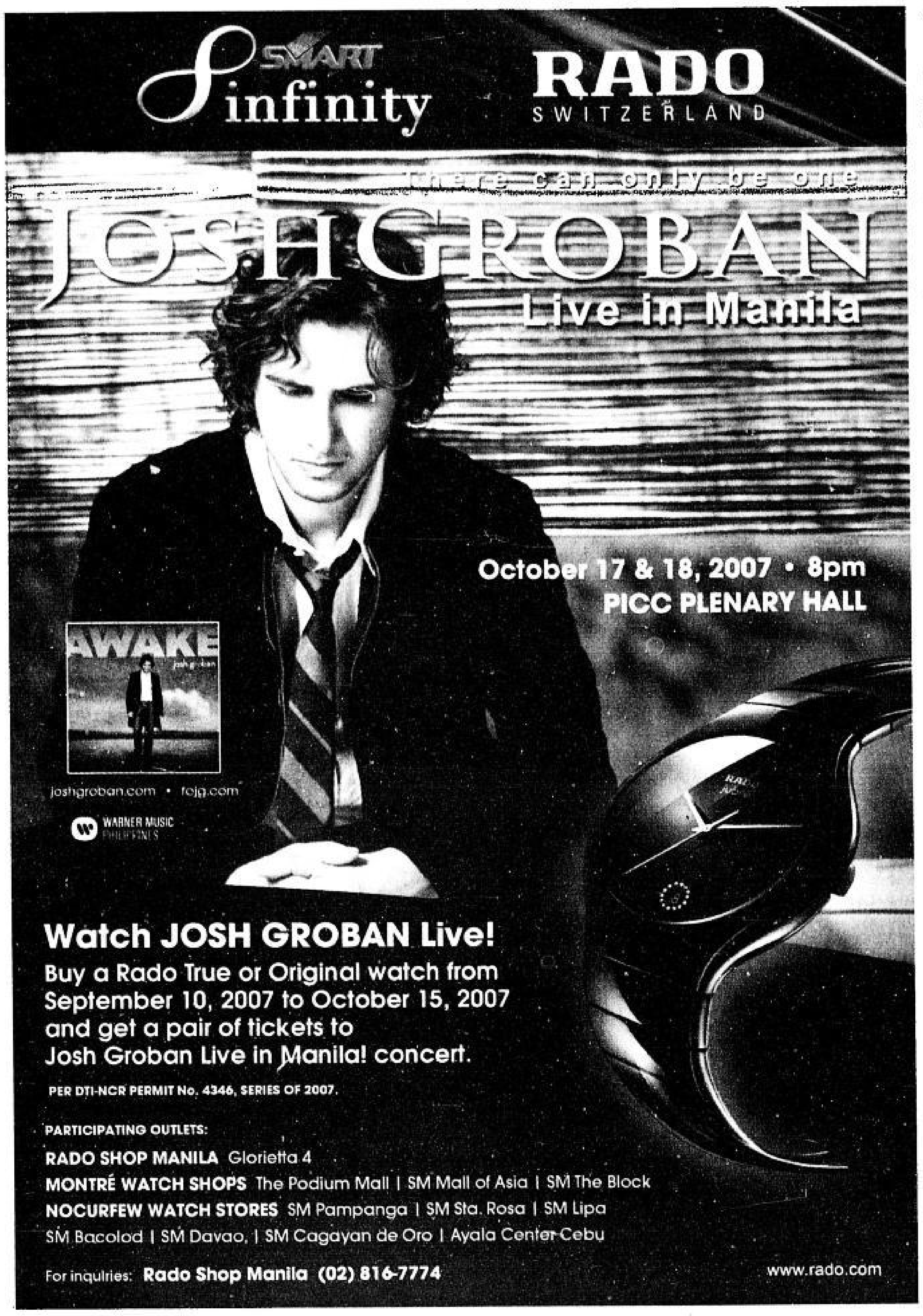
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What Snooky…

From page E1

weird because we're just friends." (How about, "Were not gay?")

Basic ingredients

- Rhian Ramos on her relationship with Richard Gutierrez:

"'*Yung una kong* on-screen kiss *nasa kanya na. Tapos 'yung una ko yatang sampal nasa kanya na rin. Una kong iyak nasa kanya na rin. Parang mahirap namang hind maging* close *sa tao*." (Three basic ingredients—got that.)

- Would she say "yes" if Richard courted her?

"He's really a nice guy. He makes me laugh. He's understanding. *Tapos tuwing may mahirap na* scene, *inaalalayan niya ako*." (Three more basic ingredients—got that.)

Opposite of nice

- Pinky Marquez on hearing reports that daughter Karel was pregnant:

"It's not nice."

- Rock guitarist Ira Cruz on reconciling with his girlfriend, model-actress-TV host Phoemela Barranda:

"You realize what you've lost only when it's not there anymore. After a month, *nag-usap kami… Umabot 'yung* conversation *na kumbaga*… I still loved her. So we decided to try to work things out."

- Phoemela on rumors Ira had beat her up:

"*Ayoko na sanang sagutin 'yun kasi nasa* stage *po kami na pinag-uusapan namin 'yung naging problema namin… Kung nagkaroon kami ng* argument … that was blown out of proportion. *Ayoko na pong magbigay ng detalye… dahil hindi na po makakatulong sa akin sa sitwasyon ko ngayon*." (Was that a long-winded yes-he-did?)

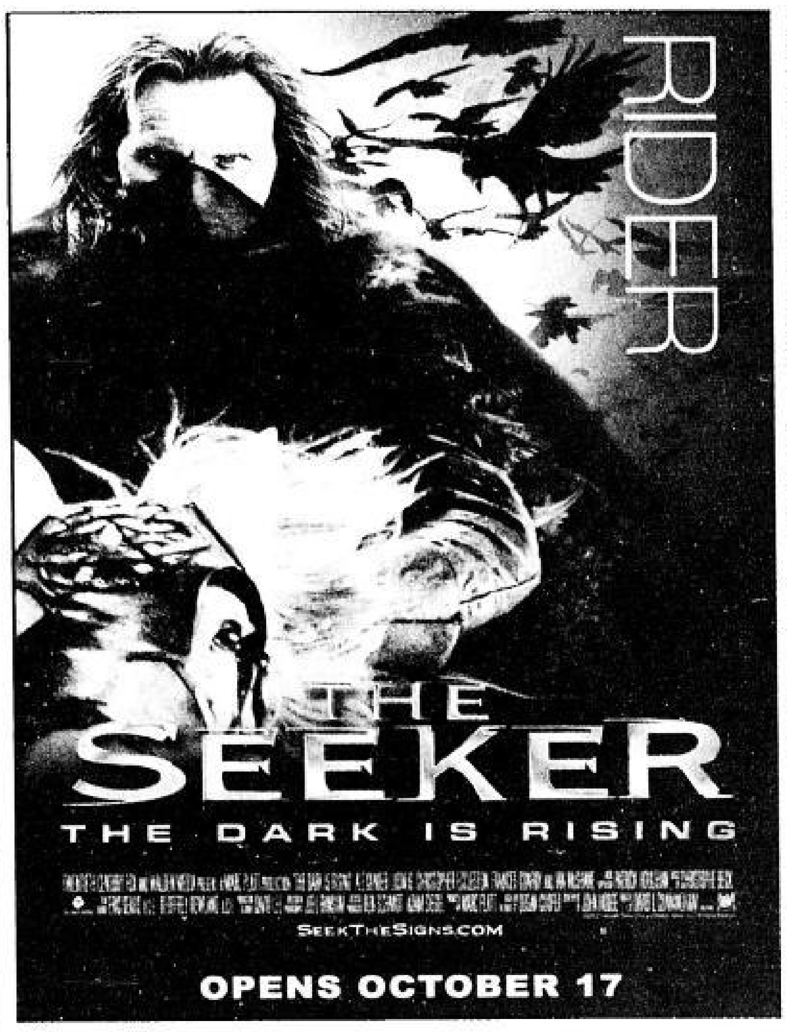
- Aiko Melendez on why she chose to keep mum about her separation from Martin Jickain:

"Because of my children. This is private… and I'd like to deal [with it] privately… I want to keep quiet about everything." (That's hard to do on nationwide TV.)

- Aiko, pushed a little more:

"As much as I want to tell you in detail what's happening in my life, the only thing I can say right now is, it's over." (*Itutuloy.*)

SON OF STING. Singer and bassist of the group "Fiction Plane"—and son of Sting—Joe Sumner performs on Sept. 29 at the "Stade de France" in Saint-Denis, Northern Paris, for the first part of the concert of "The Police." AFP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GREENBELT 3	THX NO RESERVATIONS GUARANTEED SEATS	THX SPANISH FILM FESTIVAL GUARANTEED SEATS	HARSH TIMES GUARANTEED SEATS	RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION GUARANTEED SEATS	DECEMBER BOYS GUARANTEED SEATS		
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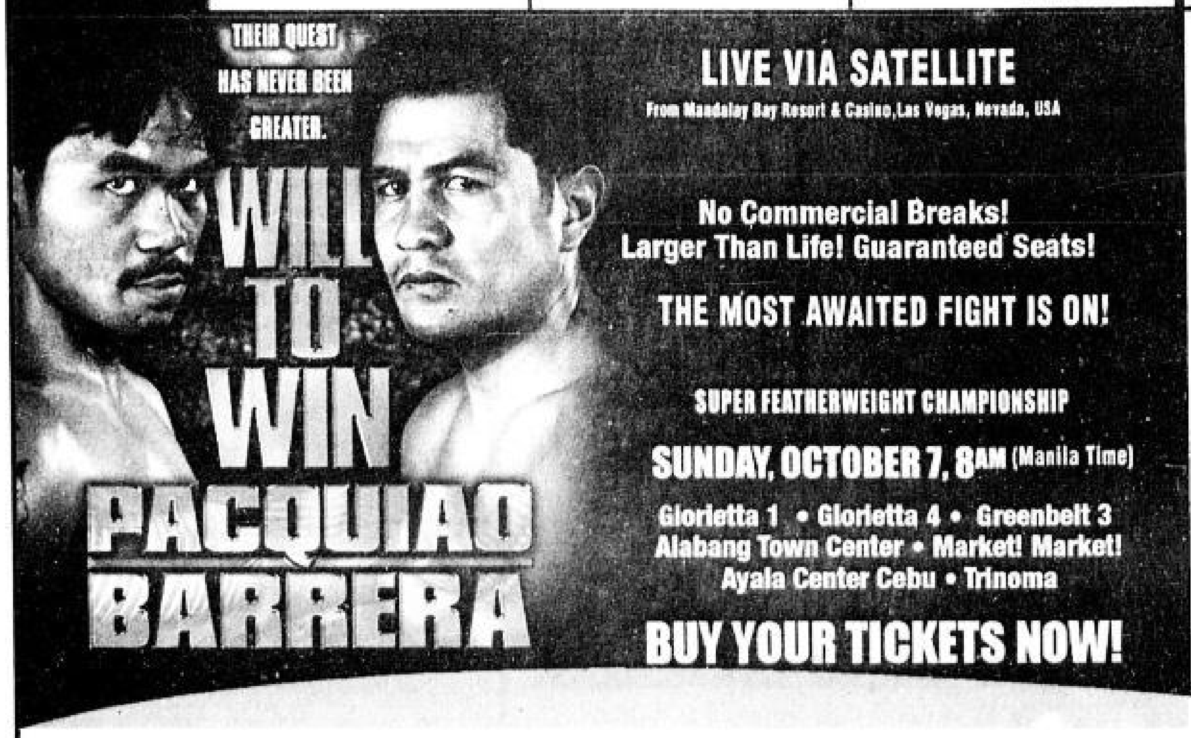
Mall	Event
glorietta	BPI Appliance Madness September 26 to October 16 at Glorietta Activity Center
GREENBELT	Viva Mexico: A Traditional Mexican Costume Exhibit October 8 to 15; Greenbelt 3 Lobby
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	Fitness At The Town September 3 to December 14, 2007; Mon. / Wed. / Fri. - 6 PM; Town Plaza
AYALA CENTER CEBU	BPI Automadness Exhibit October 11 to 14; Paseos
MARKET! MARKET!	Stargazing: "Apat Dapat Dapat Apat" Mall Tour October 5; 5 PM; Activity Center
Greenbelt Onstage	Repertory Philippines presents LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST September 15 - October 7, 2007 For inquiries, pls. call 887-0710 or visit www.repertory-philippines.com
Ayala MUSEUM	HYBRIDITY: Mark Lewis Higgins September 18 to October 28, 2007; Ground Floor For more info, pls. call 757-7117 to 21 loc. 14 or email museum_inquiry@ayalamuseum.org
TriNoma	Rhythm Academy: Nina with the Kilyawan Boys October 6; 7 PM; TriNoma Park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Dynamic KOREA celebrates 5,000 years of history

A dynamic Korea brings to mind a modern and progressive society, unique traditions, culture and sentiments that define a race, a country where the ancient and the modern co-exist and where people possess the passion and the challenge to be better as a nation. It is the idea of the spirit, success, hope and inspiration that Korea now stands for before the eyes of the world.

Today, October 3, Korea celebrates its Foundation Day, a celebration that has roots in Korea's colorful 5,000-year history. Known also as the "Opening of the Sky Day," the celebration symbolically speaks of the beginning of Korean history when the son of the King of Heaven came down to earth and whose son founded Korea's first kingdom.

According to legend, Hwan-ung, the son of the King of Heaven, yearned to live on Earth among the valleys and the mountains. His father sent him along with 3,000 helpers to rule Earth and provide humans with great happiness. Hwan-ung descended to Mount Taebaeksan, and named the place Shinshi or City of God. From here, he instituted laws and moral codes and taught the humans various arts, medicine and agriculture.

Meanwhile, a tiger and a bear living in a cave together prayed to become human. Upon hearing their prayers, Hwan-ung made them undergo a test, which the bear successfully fulfilled and thus was transformed into a woman.

The bear-woman was very grateful; however lacking a companion she soon became sad and prayed beneath a sandalwood tree to be blessed with a child. Hwan-ung, moved by her prayers, took her for his wife and soon she gave birth to Tangun, who developed into a wise and powerful leader establishing Korea's first kingdom.

The Tangun legend not only reflects Korean ideals, but helped develop the pride of a people with a long history and ancient culture. Through the centuries, Koreans have preserved this legend which became a source of spiritual comfort in times of crisis. The story represents the whole foundation of Korean culture and is the key to understanding their history.

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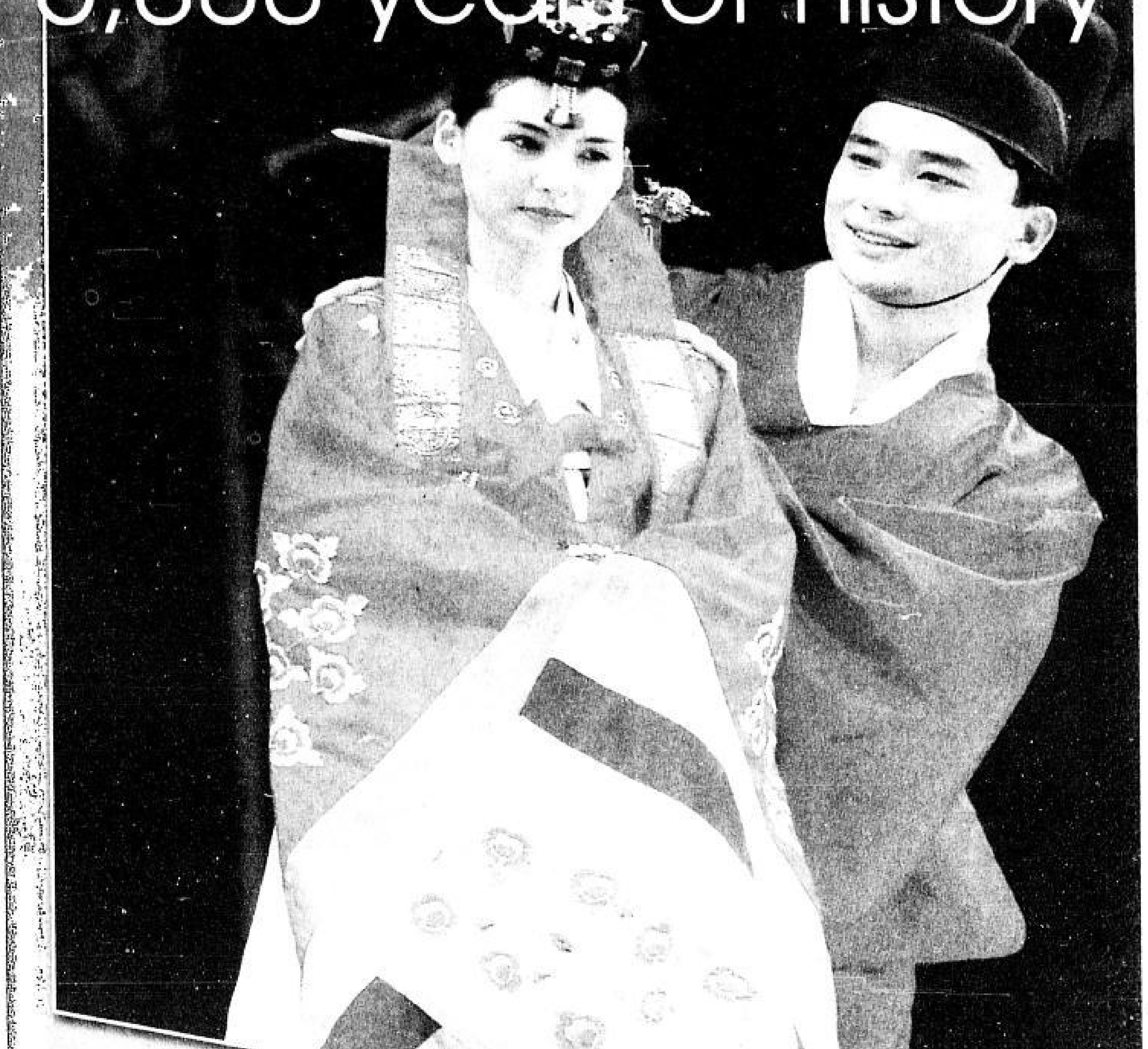
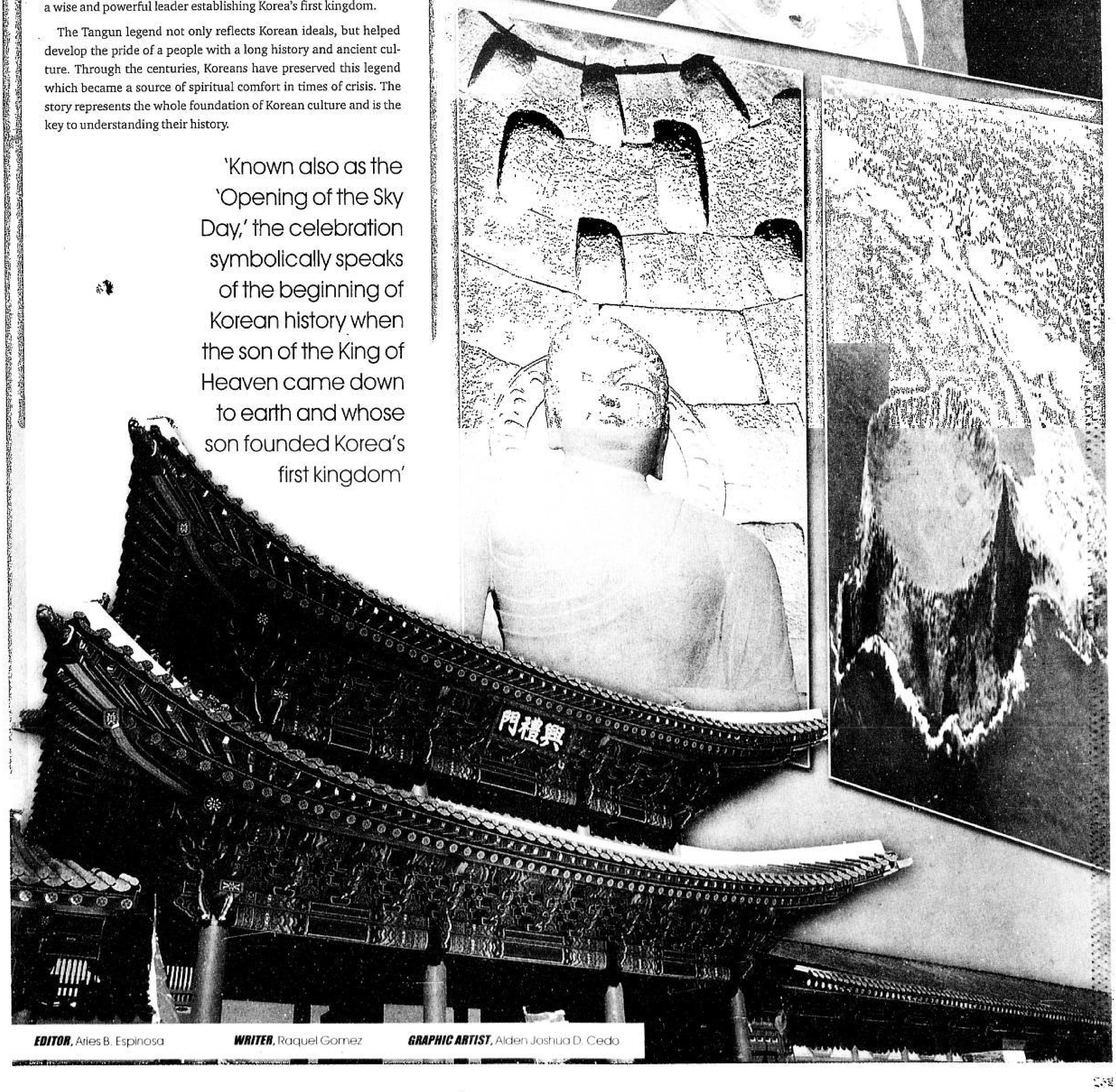
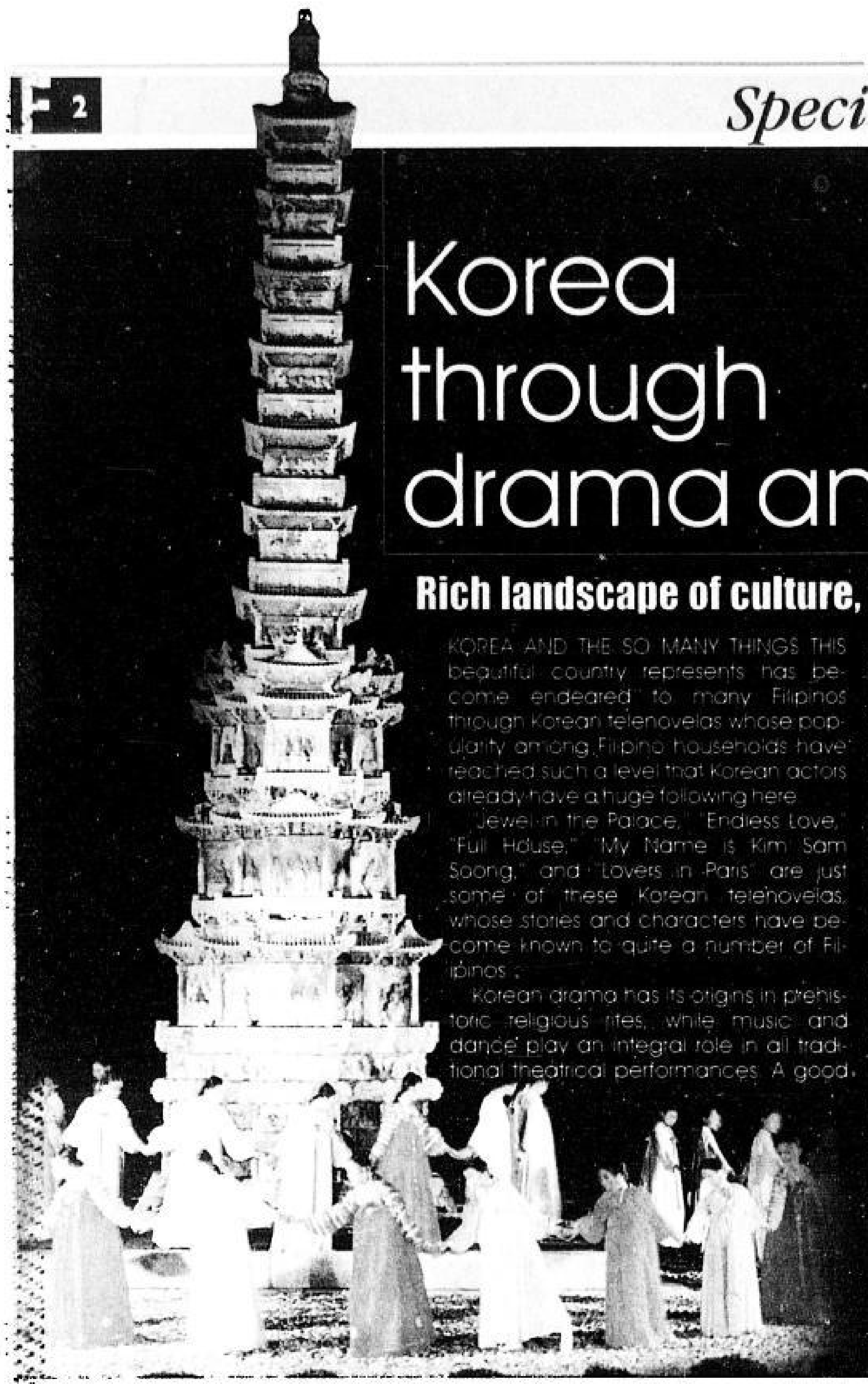




EDITOR, Aries B. Espinosa **WRITER**, Raquel Gomez **GRAPHIC ARTIST**, Alden Joshua D. Cedo



Korea through drama and films

Rich landscape of culture, images, and stories

KOREA AND THE SO MANY THINGS THIS beautiful country represents has become endeared to many Filipinos through Korean telenovelas whose popularity among Filipino households have reached such a level that Korean actors already have a huge following here.

"Jewel in the Palace," "Endless Love," "Full House," "My Name is Kim Sam Soong," and "Lovers in Paris" are just some of these Korean telenovelas, whose stories and characters have become known to quite a number of Filipinos.

Korean drama has its origins in prehistoric religious rites, while music and dance play an integral role in all traditional theatrical performances. A good example of this classical theatrical form is the masked dance called *sandaenori* or *talchum*, a combination of dance, song and narrative punctuated with satire and humor.

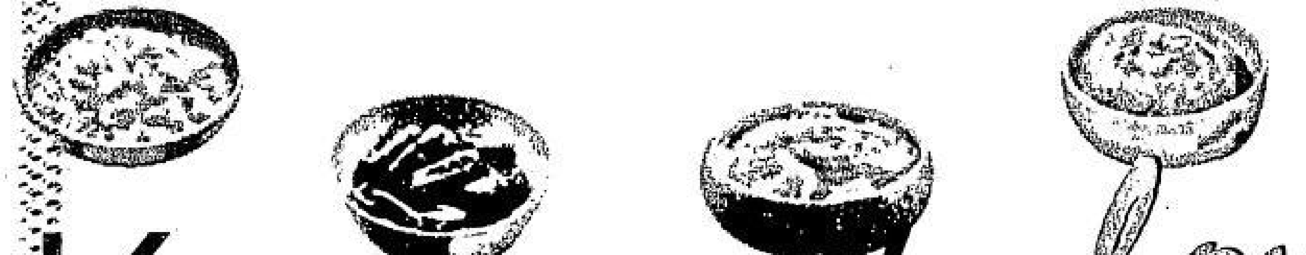
Lightly varying from one region to another in terms of style, dialogue and costume, it enjoyed remarkable popularity among rural people until the early 20th century.

Pansori, the lengthy narrative songs based on popular tales, and *kkokdugaksinoreum* or puppet plays, performed by vagabond artists, also drew large audiences. The shamanistic rituals known as *gut* were another form of religious theater that appealed to the populace. All these performances are presented nowadays, too, though not very often.

There are a few institutions that offer various performing arts in one place, an example of this being Jeong-dong Theater in central Seoul, that presents a traditional performing arts series, drama and music.

DRAMA/F4

THE Mask Dance Drama is a social satire making bitter fun of pompous aristocrats and depraved monks.



Korean's love affair with food

Two famous dishes—kimchi and bulgogi—gastronomically signify what it means to be a Korean

Two foods that people have come to identify with Korea are *kimchi*, a fermented vegetable dish, and *bulgogi*, a marinated meat dish. Whereas *kimchi* is a staple dish that is eaten at every meal, *bulgogi* is more like a party food generally eaten on special occasions like dining out or entertaining guests.

Healthy kimchi

Kimchi is a pungent, fermented dish generally consisting of cabbage or turnip seasoned with salt, garlic, green onions, ginger, red pepper and shellfish. Low in calories and cholesterol and very high in *fiber*, kimchi is very nutritious. In fact it is richer in vitamins than apple.

To a Korean, instead of saying "an apple a day keeps the doctor away," they'd probably say "Some *kimchi* a day keeps the doctor away."

Here's why: The most common variety of cabbage that's made into kimchi contains 492 units of vitamin A, .03 mg of vitamin B1, .06 mg of vitamin B2, 12 mg of vitamin C and 2.1 mg of niacin.

A medium-size apple, on the other hand, contains only 50 units of vitamin A and only trace amounts of vitamins B1 and B2, 3 mg of vitamin C and traces of niacin.

Kimchi contains a number of organic acids produced during the fermentation process that help sterilize the digestive tract and aid in digestion. Kimchi also contains high levels of protein, calcium and iron that are derived mainly from seafood such as oysters, squid, shrimp and anchovies that are used for flavoring the dish.

A good source of fiber, *kimchi* may contain many of the nutrients and naturally occurring chemicals that can help combat cancers of the mouth, throat, lungs, stomach, bladder, colon and cervix.

Radish roots, another major *kimchi* ingredient, are not only rich in vitamins but also diastase, an enzyme that promotes the digestion of carbohydrates. Radish stalks and leaves are also a good source of calcium, vitamin C and carotene.

Other *kimchi* ingredients such as watercress, sponge seaweed, Indian mustard leaves and garlic also contribute a lot to make *kimchi* a healthy food.

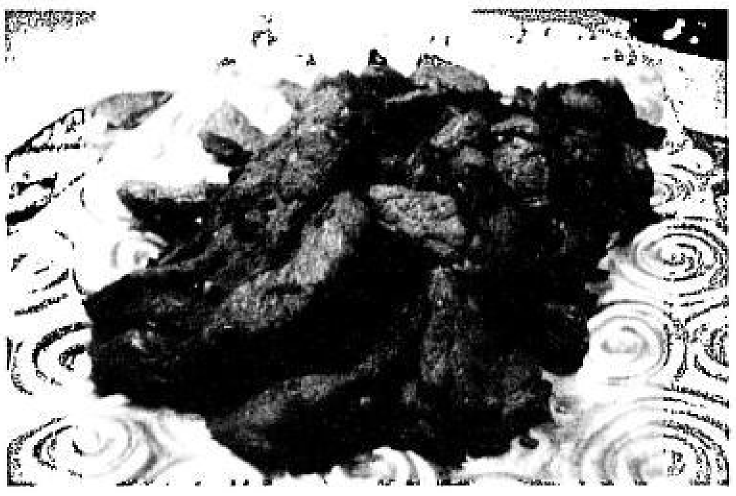
The red chili peppers in *kimchi* make it a truly remarkable health food and different from the *ju* and *osinko* of China and Japan, dishes often likened to *kimchi*. Chili peppers not only give *kimchi* its distinctive spicy flavor and appetizing color but also contain capsicin that prevents the taste of *kimchi* from turning by checking the decomposition process. Aside from helping break down fats in the body, peppers have large doses of vitamins A, B and C.

There are basically two kinds of *kimchi*—seasonal and winter, with numerous varieties of each. The seasonal varieties are made with whatever vegetables are available and are for short-term storage. The winter varieties, made with mostly cabbages and turnips, are for long-term storage to provide a supply of vegetables during the cold winter months.

Baechu *kimchi* is the most prevalent type. Gimjang *kimchi*, also known as winter *kimchi*, is usually made in late November.

In addition to being eaten as a staple side dish, *kimchi* is also used in a variety of cooked dishes, the most common is *kimchi jjigae*, a hot, fiery stew made by boiling *kimchi* with pork. Kimchi is also stir-fried with thin strips of pork and eaten with fresh tofu, or *dubu* as bean curd is known in Korean.

To most Koreans, a meal without *kimchi*, no matter how lavish, is incomplete or even unthinkable.



KIMCHI making is a social activity among Korean women (above); beef bulgogi and kimchi (upper right).

Korean 'fire meat'

The Korean word *bulgogi* literally means "fire meat." Beef is most often identified with *bulgogi*, but even pork, chicken, lamb, squid, and octopus, for example, can be cooked *bulgogi* style, like "barbecue" is a method of cooking.

The most common beef *bulgogi* is made with thick slices of meat, usually tenderloin, marinated in a sauce made of soy sauce, sesame oil, minced garlic, sesame seeds and other seasonings, and then cooked over a charcoal grill often at the table.

The grilled slices can already be eaten by themselves or eaten wrapped in lettuce leaf along with slices of fresh garlic, green pepper dabbed in soybean paste, red pepper paste, or a mixture of the two.

In some restaurants, *bulgogi* is cooked on a dome-shaped pan that is placed over a charcoal brazier or a gas range. The pan has a trough around the edge to catch the tasty juice that cooks out of the meat so that it can be poured onto the rice.

Bulgogi can also be cooked in a regular frying pan or an electric skillet, but most connoisseurs prefer the traditional charcoal.

For the pork and other types of *bulgogi*, a little red pepper paste is usually added to the marinade. This gives the *bulgogi* a spicy taste and aroma.

Recently, people have been finding that *bulgogi* is not only tasty and healthy, but also very versatile. It has been adapted to today's fast foods with some sandwich chains adding *bulgogi* to burgers to their menus and a number of well-known pizza restaurants even adopting it as one of their pizza toppings. Bulgogi is an ideal picnic food and, with some slight changes in the thickness and size of the meat pieces, it can become a tasty *hors d'ouvre* or buffet item.

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Radish roots, another major *kimchi* ingredient, are not only rich in vitamins but also diastase, an enzyme that promotes the digestion of carbohydrates. Radish stalks and leaves are also a good source of calcium, vitamin C and carotene.

Other *kimchi* ingredients such as watercress, sponge seaweed, Indian mustard leaves and garlic also contribute a lot to make *kimchi* a healthy food.

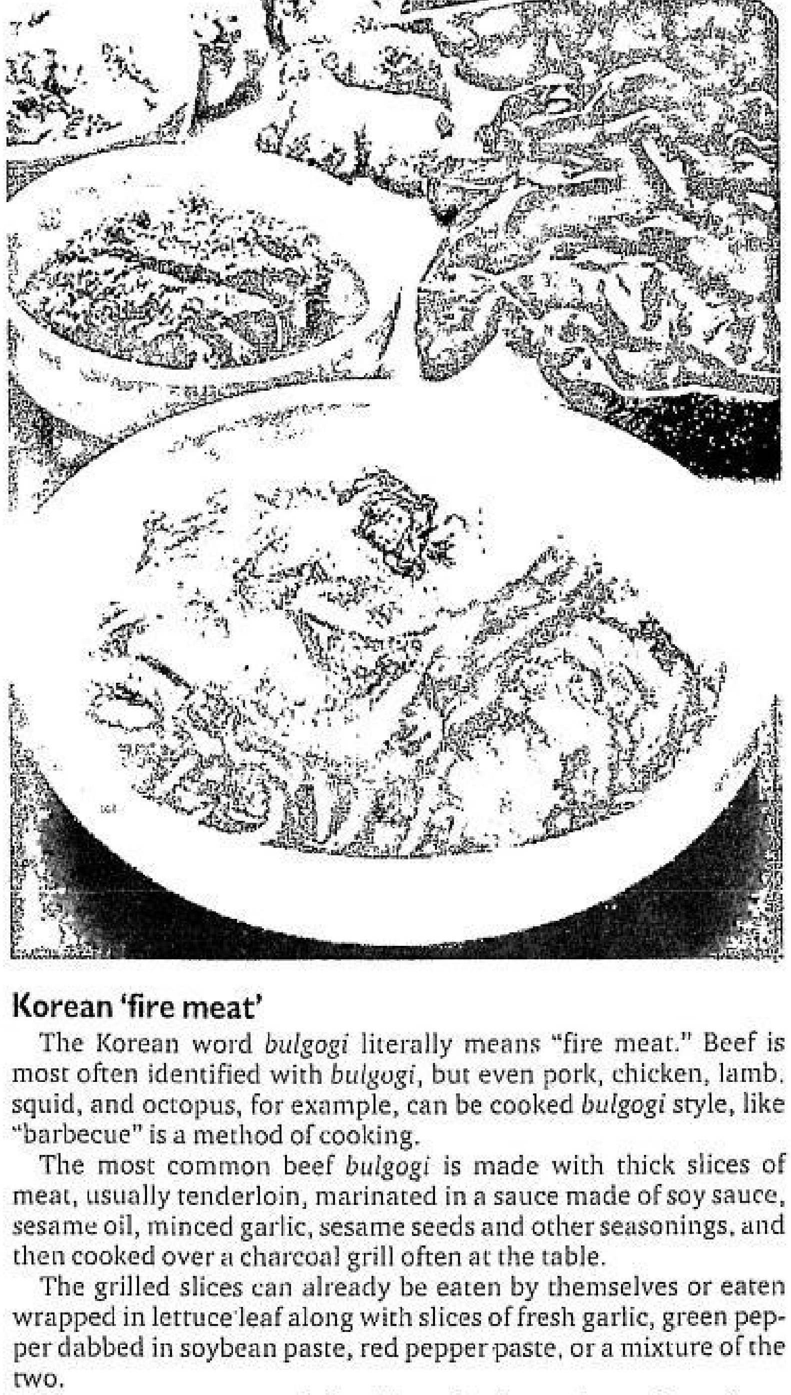
The red chili peppers in *kimchi* make it a truly remarkable health food and different from the *ju* and *osinko* of China and Japan, dishes often likened to *kimchi*. Chili peppers not only give *kimchi* its distinctive spicy flavor and appetizing color but also contain capsicin that prevents the taste of *kimchi* from turning by checking the decomposition process. Aside from helping break down fats in the body, peppers have large doses of vitamins A, B and C.

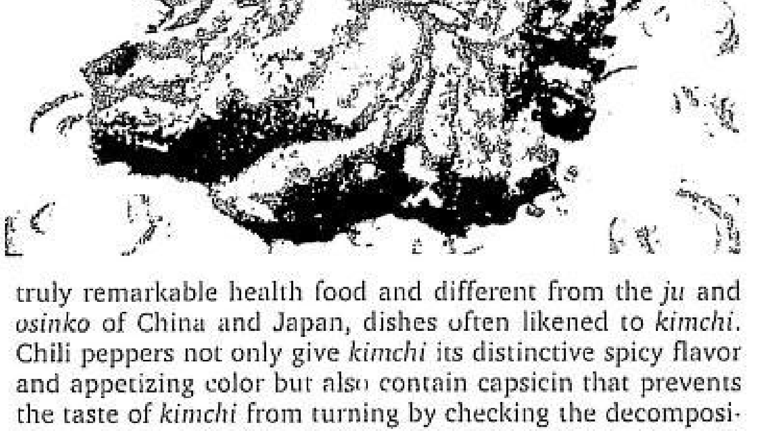
There are basically two kinds of *kimchi*—seasonal and winter, with numerous varieties of each. The seasonal varieties are made with whatever vegetables are available and are for short-term storage. The winter varieties, made with mostly cabbages and turnips, are for long-term storage to provide a supply of vegetables during the cold winter months.

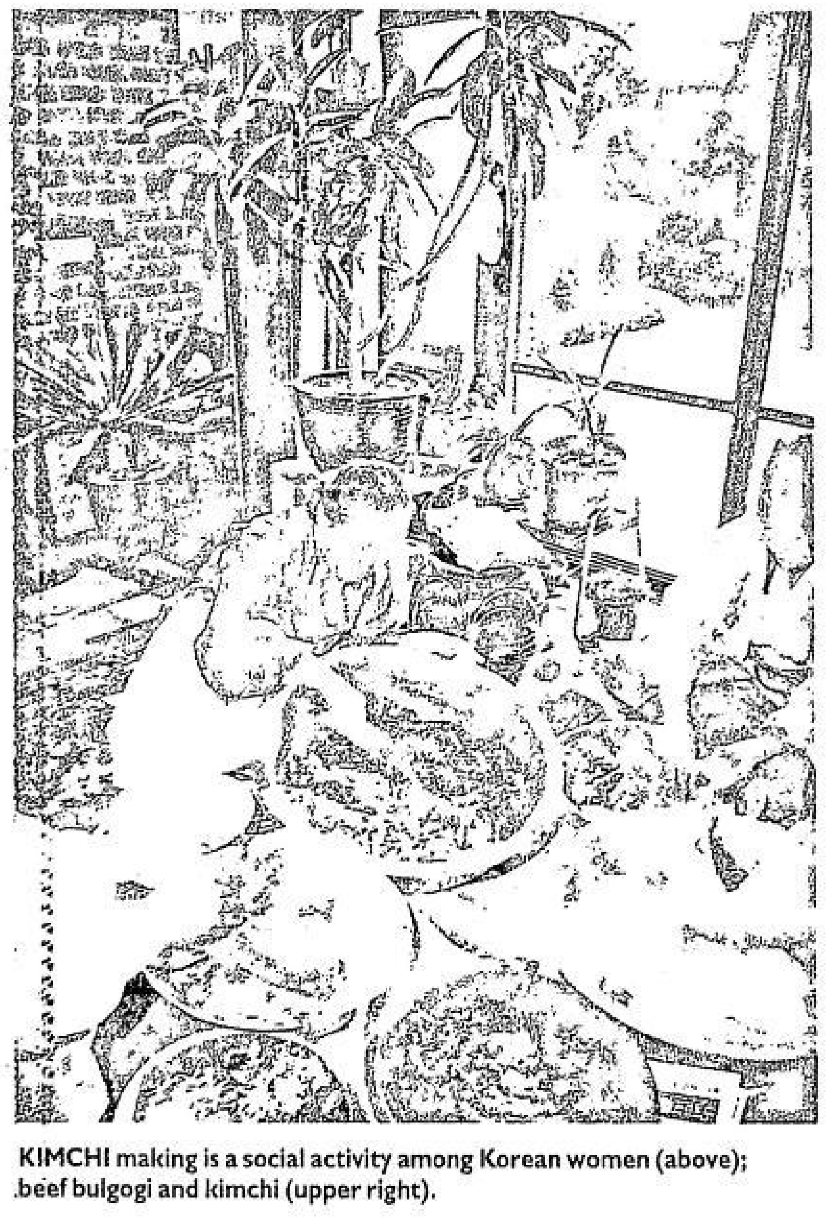
Baechu *kimchi* is the most prevalent type. Gimjang *kimchi*, also known as winter *kimchi*, is usually made in late November.

In addition to being eaten as a staple side dish, *kimchi* is also used in a variety of cooked dishes, the most common is *kimchi jjigae*, a hot, fiery stew made by boiling *kimchi* with pork. Kimchi is also stir-fried with thin strips of pork and eaten with fresh tofu, or *dubu* as bean curd is known in Korean.

To most Koreans, a meal without *kimchi*, no matter how lavish, is incomplete or even unthinkable.







KIMCHI making is a social activity among Korean women (above); beef bulgogi and kimchi (upper right).

Korean 'fire meat'

The Korean word *bulgogi* literally means "fire meat." Beef is most often identified with *bulgogi*, but even pork, chicken, lamb, squid, and octopus, for example, can be cooked *bulgogi* style, like "barbecue" is a method of cooking.

The most common beef *bulgogi* is made with thick slices of meat, usually tenderloin, marinated in a sauce made of soy sauce, sesame oil, minced garlic, sesame seeds and other seasonings, and then cooked over a charcoal grill often at the table.

The grilled slices can already be eaten by themselves or eaten wrapped in lettuce leaf along with slices of fresh garlic, green pepper dabbed in soybean paste, red pepper paste, or a mixture of the two.

In some restaurants, *bulgogi* is cooked on a dome-shaped pan that is placed over a charcoal brazier or a gas range. The pan has a trough around the edge to catch the tasty juice that cooks out of the meat so that it can be poured onto the rice.

Bulgogi can also be cooked in a regular frying pan or an electric skillet, but most connoisseurs prefer the traditional charcoal.

For the pork and other types of *bulgogi*, a little red pepper paste is usually added to the marinade. This gives the *bulgogi* a spicy taste and aroma.

Recently, people have been finding that *bulgogi* is not only tasty and healthy, but also very versatile. It has been adapted to today's fast foods with some sandwich chains adding *bulgogi* to burgers to their menus and a number of well-known pizza restaurants even adopting it as one of their pizza toppings. Bulgogi is an ideal picnic food and, with some slight changes in the thickness and size of the meat pieces, it can become a tasty *hors d'ouvre* or buffet item.

RETAKE OF PRECEDING FRAME

Korea through drama and films

Rich landscape of culture, images, and stories

KOREA AND THE SO MANY THINGS THIS beautiful country represents has become endeared to many Filipinos through Korean telenovelas whose popularity among Filipino households have reached such a level that Korean actors already have a huge following here.

"Jewel in the Palace," "Endless Love," "Full House," "My Name is Kim Sam Soong," and "Lovers in Paris" are just some of these Korean telenovelas, whose stories and characters have become known to quite a number of Filipinos.

Korean drama has its origins in prehistoric religious rites, while music and dance play an integral role in all traditional theatrical performances. A good example of this classical theatrical form is the masked dance called *sandaenori* or *talchum*, a combination of dance, song and narrative punctuated with satire and humor.

Lightly varying from one region to another in terms of style, dialogue and costume, it enjoyed remarkable popularity among rural people until the early 20th century.

Pansori, the lengthy narrative songs based on popular tales, and *kkokdugaksinoreum* or puppet plays, performed by vagabond artists, also drew large audiences. The shamanistic rituals known as *gut* were another form of religious theater that appealed to the populace. All these performances are presented nowadays, too, though not very often.

There are a few institutions that offer various performing arts in one place, an example of this being Jeong-dong Theater in central Seoul, that presents a traditional performing arts series of drama and music.

DRAMA/ F4

THE Mask Dance Drama is a social satire making bitter fun of pompous aristocrats and depraved monks.

Korean's love affair with food

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Healthy kimchi

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Korean 'fire meat'

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KIMCHI making is a social activity among Korean women (above); beef bulgogi and kimchi (upper right).

RETAKE OF PRECEDING FRAME

messages

ON BEHALF OF THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT and the Filipino people, I convey my warmest felicitations on the Republic of Korea's celebration of its Foundation Day this 3rd of October 2007.

The Republic of Korea's rich cultural history and emergence as a global economic leader have inspired many nations.

The Philippines, in particular, looks to the Republic of Korea as a productive partner and a true friend.

Our robust bilateral relations are founded firmly on shared aspirations for greater peace, progress and prosperity for our peoples and our region.

Through these years, we have stood side by side in pursuit of common objectives. Today, the ties that bind our nations and peoples are deep, profound and continue to flourish.

Our partnership continues to expand across all fields.

The Republic of Korea is one of the Philippines' top trading partners. Direct investments from the Republic of Korea continue to rise. Korean nationals account for nearly 20 percent of our visitors.

Development cooperation, too, remains a cornerstone of our relations, as is Philippines-Republic of Korea collaboration in regional and international initiatives. Guided by our shared ideals in democracy, human rights and peace and security, we are helping reinforce the foundations of a more caring and sharing region and world.

On this significant occasion, I therefore reaffirm the Philippines' commitment to further strengthen the bonds between our countries, and look forward to further elevating to greater heights our meaningful relations with the Republic of Korea.

Mabuhay!

GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO (*Sgd.*)
President of the Philippines

IT IS WITH DEEP PRIDE AND HONOR THAT I invite Filipinos and the Korean community here in the Philippines to celebrate the National Foundation Day of the Republic of Korea. Today, October 3, is the historic anniversary of Korea, as a nation and as a people; it marks the formation of our national identity and culture.

Over the past years, the Republic of Korea has become one of the most prosperous and dynamic countries in the world. Amid numerous threats, Korea has continuously stood by its ideals of democracy and a free market economy. Through much sacrifice and hardships, these ideals paid off and Korea was able to attain the fruits of the industrial progress which we now know as the "Miracle on the Hangang River".

As Korea progressed, we realized that Korea has the moral duty to give back to other nations the lessons and knowledge it painstakingly acquired in its development process. In this context, the National Day of the Republic of Korea is the most appropriate time to reemphasize its commitment to help developing countries attain their own prosperity. And what better way to start this off is by assisting one of our dearest friends, the Philippines.

The tie that binds Korea and the Philippines has become increasingly stronger throughout the years and has stood the test of time. During the Korean War, 7,000 members of Philippine Expeditionary Forces to Korea (PEFTOK) stood by us to fight for our democracy. Korea's commitment to the Philippines stems from this resolute bond.

To date, Korea sees the Philippines as a partner in areas of trade, investment, tourism and development assistance. In recent years, Korean corporations identify the Philippines as an ideal venue for investment in infrastructure building such as ship-building, power generation, petro-chemical plant, manufacturing and so on. Without doubt, these partnerships will help strengthen economies of both Korea and the Philippines.

Also in 2006, trade volume between Korea and the Philippines totaled US$6 billion making Korea the Philippines' 8th biggest trade partner. This number only promises to increase with the recent signing of the Korea-Asean Free Trade Agreement.

It is also worthwhile to note that over 600,000 Korean tourists came here last year, making them the largest tourist group to this beautiful country.

On the occasion of our National Day, I am also honored to reaffirm Korea's commitment to the priority areas and principles laid out in the Medium Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP). Korea believes that by prioritizing strategic and critical infrastructure projects, trade and investments will be stimulated. As such, Korea has committed to assist the Philippines in infrastructure projects such as the North-South railway linkage, the Laguindingan Airport in Cagayan de Oro City, and the Gapan-San Fernando-Olongapo road expansion.

I am honored to reiterate Korea's contribution to exchanging knowledge with Filipinos. We believe that economic development of countries depend on people who are experienced in preparing economic plans, procuring necessary investment capital and executing economic policies necessary for economic growth. It is with this ideal in mind that Korea has invited 1,284 Filipino trainees to Korea, financed six development research projects, and dispatched 20 Korean experts and 225 Korean volunteers to the Philippines from 1991 to 2006. These exchanges will empower the people resources of our two countries.

On this day, the Korean people proudly celebrate the founding of its nation. On behalf of all Koreans, I extend my warmest gratitude to the Philippine Government and all the Filipinos for the warm welcome and support to Korea and my fellow Koreans. May this day be a reaffirmation of the friendship and cooperation between our two countries and people.

Maraming Salamat at mabuhay tayong lahat (Thank you and long live!)

HONG JONG-KI (*Sgd.*)
Ambassador, Republic of Korea to the Philippines

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JANG DONG GUN
WON BIN
LEE EUN JOO

Successful Korean Film Festival held at UP Film Institute

THE MANY FACETS OF SOUTH KOREA IN love, war, peace, present and past times are reflected in a number of Korean films shown recently at the UP Film Institute in UP Diliman Quezon City.

The Korean Film Festival, put up through the efforts of the Korean Embassy, successfully screened a number of award winning Korean films.

The film festival tour de force include "Tae Guk Gi" (The Brotherhood of War) a film by Kang Je-gyu about two brothers unwillingly drafted into the South Korean army following the outbreak of the Korean War. For a war movie, it is heartwarming and sensitive as the story follows the lives of the two brothers going through the trials of war, trying at all cost to take care of each other, but facing tragedy in the end. The film won Best Picture, Best Director at the 2005 Asian Film Awards.

"JSA: Joint Security Area" by Korean filmmaker Park Chan-wack is about the tragic shootout at the border of the two Koreas prompting an international investigation team composed of members from neutral countries to look into the incident. The events unravel to reveal a story that goes beyond what everyone imagined.

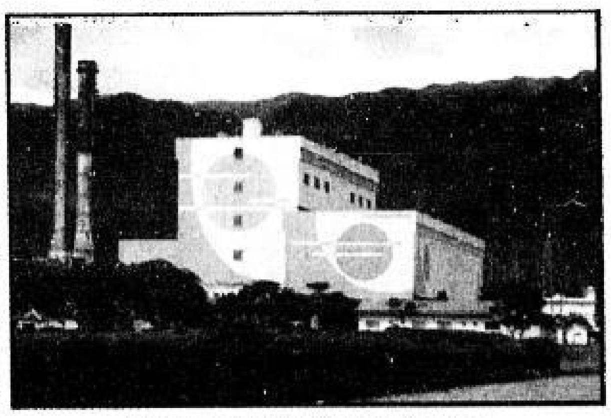
The film was the official selection for the Golden Berlin Bear and was the 2000 Berlin International Film Festival Best Film, Deauvile Asian Film Festival Best Picture and recipient of Grand Bel Awards of South Korea.

An interesting and engaging film "Ditto" by filmmaker Kim Jeong-Kwon, is about a female university student who talks through a radiophone to a male schoolmate who lives 20 years away.

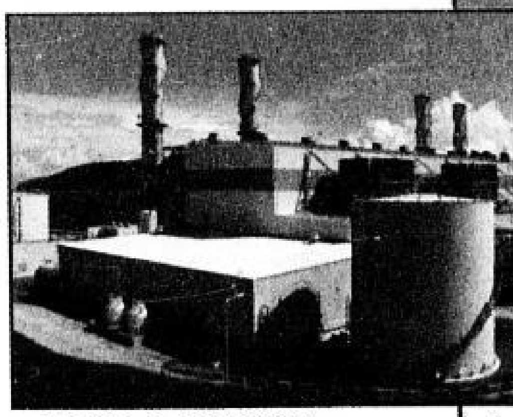
"My Heart" by filmmaker Bae Chang-ho is an epic story of a 16-year-old girl who is compelled to marry a 10-year-old boy at a time when Korea was beginning to take its first steps into the modern age. The film received the Audience Award at the 2000 Far East Film Festival in Udine Italy.

Filmmaker Yang Yun-ho's "Liberal Me" is about fire investigators who are hot on a trail of an arsonist terrorizing Seoul. The film was the official selection at the 2001 Tokyo International Film Fantastic Film Festival. It won best cinematography and best editing at the 2001 Grand Bell Awards of South Korea.

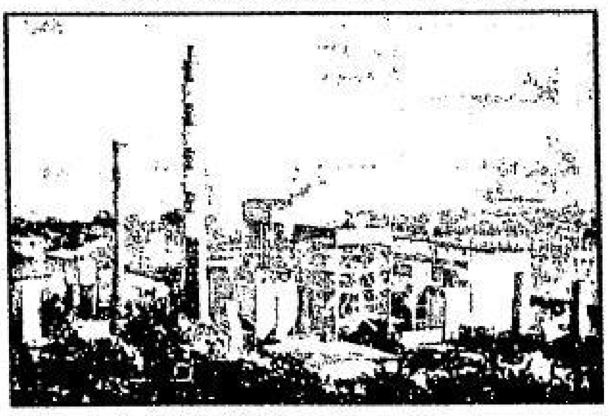
KEPCO KOREA ELECTRIC POWER CORPORATION
Together with its Philippine Project Companies
Warmly Greets the
Embassy of the Republic of Korea on its National Day Celebration



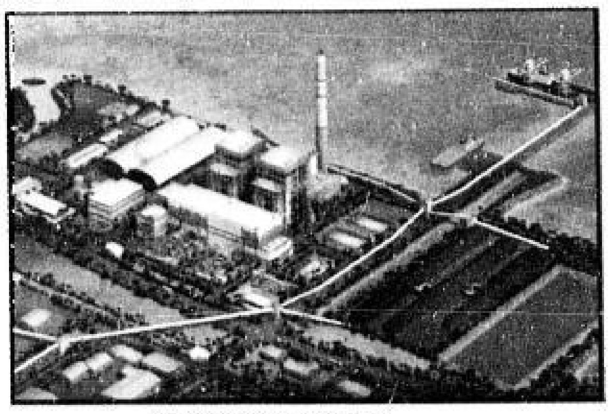
650 MW Malaya Thermal Power Plant



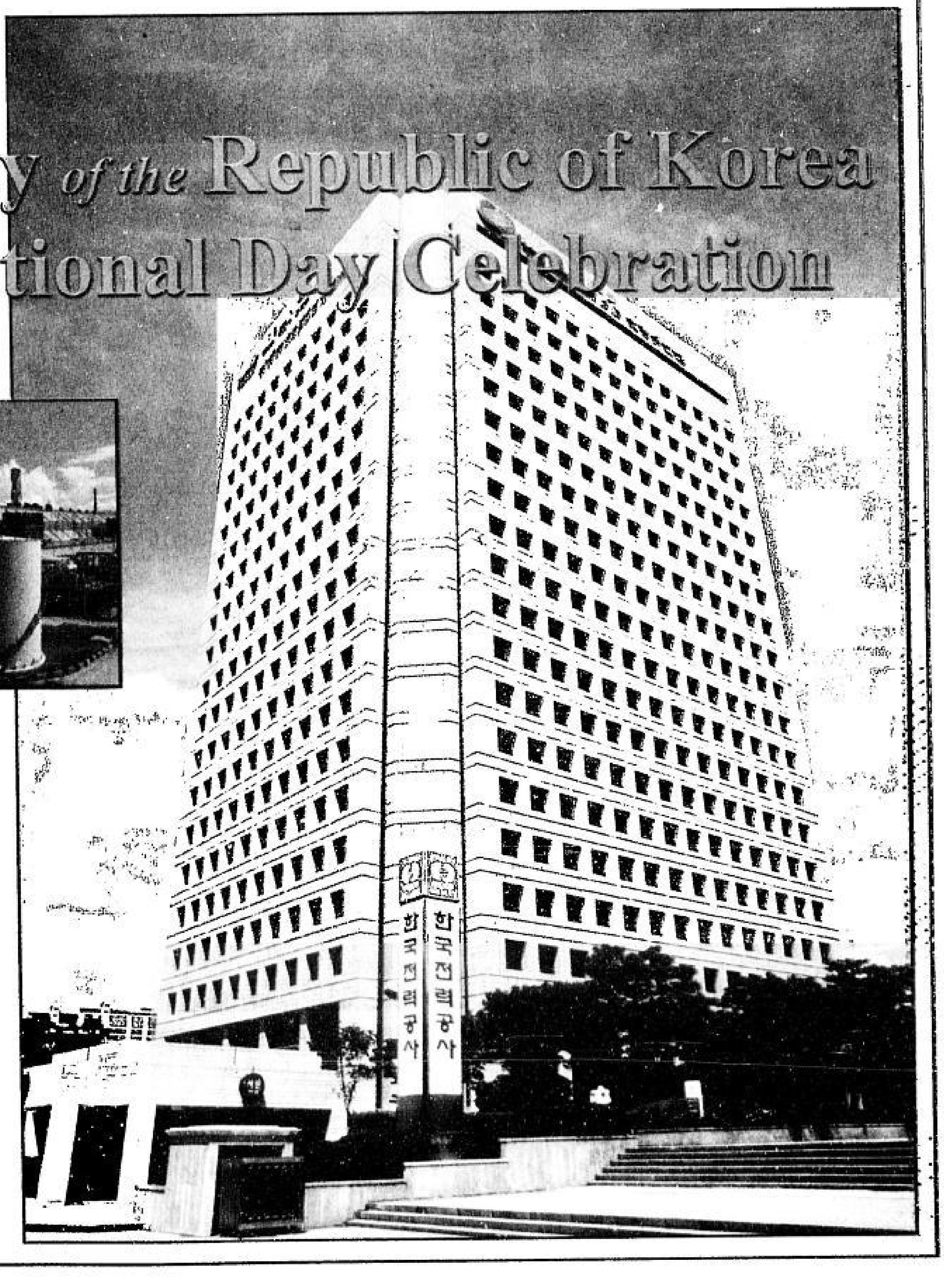
1200 MW Ilijan Natural Gas Plant



203 MW Naga SPC Coal Plant



200 MW Naga CFBC Plant



Korea through drama and films

From page F2

The first performance of *singeuk* (new drama), a departure from the masked dance and other forms of traditional dramas, was presented in December 1902. However, modern drama began to take firm root in 1910 after the first Western-style theater was opened in Seoul in 1908. The theater named Wongaksa was in operation until November 1909.

Theatrical groups Hyeoksindan and Munsuseong were also organized by those who returned from study in Japan and staged *sinpa* (new wave) dramas. Sinpa dramas first dealt with political and military themes and then were diversified into detective stories, soap operas and tragedies.

While *sinpa* dramas proved to be a passing fad, a genuine new wave of dramas was promoted by artists who rallied around Wongaksa and raised the curtain of modern drama. In 1922, Towolhoe, a coterie of theatrical figures, was formed, and led the drama movement across the country, staging as many as 87 performances. Drama remained popular until the 1930s, but then subsided in the socio-political turmoil of the 1940s and 1950s. In the following decade, it was further weakened amidst the boom of motion pictures and the emergence of television.

In the 1970s, a number of young artists began to study and adopt the styles and themes of traditional theatrical works like the masked danced plays, shaman rituals and *pansori*. The Korean Culture and Arts Foundation has been sponsoring an annual drama festival to encourage local theatrical performances. At present, a great number of theatrical groups are active around the year, featuring all manner of genres.

A TRADITIONAL Korean Dancing Troupe performs during the opening ceremony of the 16th Dance Festival.

ILLUMINATING MILESTONES

Korea's heritage shines on with Hyundai

A family huddling in front of the TV to get its daily dose of 'Koreanovela', a lady tasting kimchi for the first time, alien of the fact that this is just one among the pickled delicacy's 200 variations—and counting, an executive makes a call on his new MP3 cell phone—it's neither an American or a European brand, and another drives to his office in a sleek new Hyundai. Rain, also dubbed as the Justin Timberlake of Korea, was right after all—Korea is sparkling indeed, with its dynamic take on a treasured heritage that's making waves way beyond the country's shores.

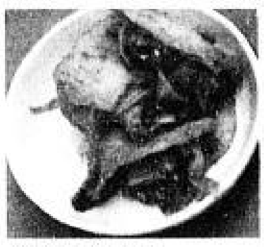
Heavenly beginnings

Korea traces its origins from its first kingdom, Gojoseon, founded by the god-king Dangun in 2333 B.C. According to legend, Dangun was a grandson of the god of heaven and is said to have built an altar at the Mount Manisan, Ganghwado province, where he offered thanks to his father and grandfather in heaven. Centuries later, Dangun's founding of Korea's first kingdom and Korea as a nation is now commemorated every 3rd of October, representing Korea's National Foundation Day. But perhaps even more important than remembering its heavenly lineage, Korea's National Foundation Day is a celebration of Korea's inherent drive to be brilliant and innovative in every way.

Riding the wave

Conservative on one side and free-spirited on the other, Korea's lifestyle unravels diversity of remarkable proportions. Its continued reinvention of signature cultural origins—from artistic disciplines, to clothing, and architecture, has propelled both industrial and commercial success around the world, igniting the phenomenal hallyu or Korean Wave.

You've seen it, felt it, heard it—it's practically everywhere, and however you've encountered it, the Korean Wave has definitely commanded your attention and the rest of the world's into Korea's definitive pop culture of entertainment, music, tastes, and high technology. Koreanovelas like Jewel In The Palace (Daejanggeum) not only raked in ratings here and abroad, but also fostered an appreciation of Korea's rich history and culinary acumen. Showbiz icons like actor Yong-Joon Bae, also regaled as Yon Sa Ma or The Emperor, from hit TV series Winter Sonata, and singers Boa and Rain, had fans rushing to watch their movies and concerts. Highly advanced enterprises like mobile technology and electronics saw Korean brands as a formidable force in satisfying increasingly stringent consumer preferences.



World famous kimchi

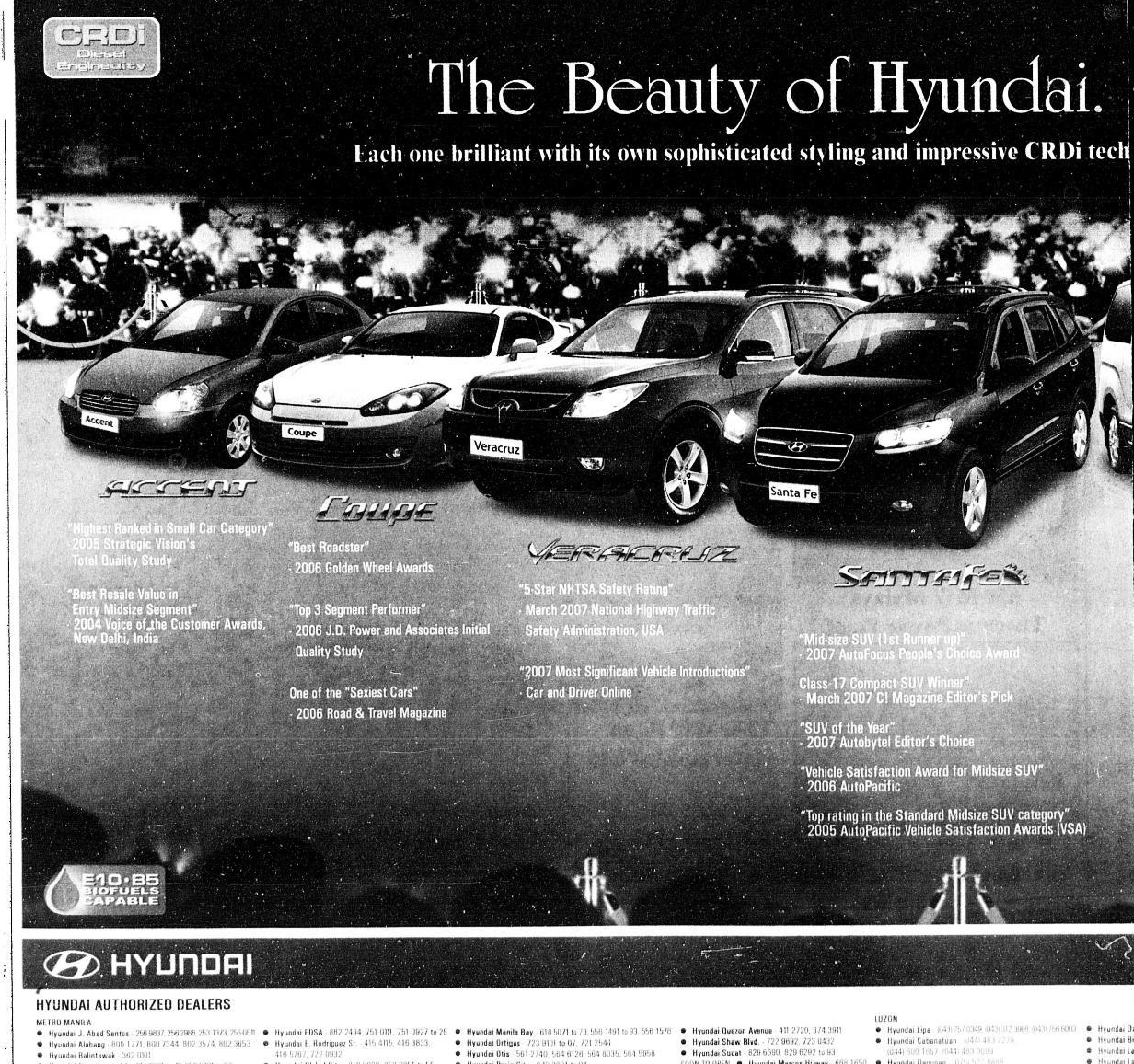
Beyond hallyu, Korea has taken great strides in more challenging fields like robotics, with its introduction of Albert Hubo, a robot with a head modeled after Albert Einstein, which graced the halls of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in Busan, South Korea in 2005, and the unveiling of the android EveR-1 in 2006. Mobility is another field that also earned for Korea its world-class distinction today. And Hyundai, with its refined and confident stance, is at the forefront of this newfound avenue of progress.

Korean police on patrol

Images at Beomeosa Buddhist Temple

Images at Jeju Island

Gyonkbuk Palace, Seoul, Korea



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"Highest Ranked in Small Car Category"
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"Best Resale Value in Entry Midsize Segment"
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Coupe

"Best Roadster"
- 2006 Golden Wheel Awards

"Top 3 Segment Performer"
- 2006 J.D. Power and Associates Initial Quality Study

One of the "Sexiest Cars"
- 2006 Road & Travel Magazine

VERACRUZ

"5-Star NHTSA Safety Rating"
- March 2007 National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, USA

"2007 Most Significant Vehicle Introductions"
- Car and Driver Online

SANTAFE

"Mid-size SUV (1st Runner up)"
- 2007 AutoFocus People's Choice Award

Class-17 Compact SUV Winner"
- March 2007 C! Magazine Editor's Pick

"SUV of the Year"
- 2007 Autobytel Editor's Choice

"Vehicle Satisfaction Award for Midsize SUV"
- 2006 AutoPacific

"Top rating in the Standard Midsize SUV category"
- 2005 AutoPacific Vehicle Satisfaction Awards (VSA)

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- Hyundai Ortigas - 723 9101 to 07, 721 2544
- Hyundai Otis - 561 2740, 564 6128, 564 8035, 564 5058
- Hyundai Pasig City - 672 3801 to 04
- Hyundai Quezon Avenue - 411 2720, 374 3911
- Hyundai Shaw Blvd. - 722 9692, 723 0432
- Hyundai Sucat - 829 6590, 829 6292 to 93

SOON TO OPEN
- Hyundai Marcos Hi-way - 668 1650

LUZON
- Hyundai Lipa - [illegible]
- Hyundai Cabanatuan - [illegible]
- Hyundai Dagupan - [illegible]
- Hyundai Da
- Hyundai Bi
- Hyundai La
- Hyundai La

National

from comedy to historical epics at small theaters along Daengno Street in downtown Seoul.

The first Korean-made film "Righteous Revenge" was shown to the public in 1919. The first feature film, "Oath Under the Moon," was screened in 1923. In 1926, charismatic actor-director Na Un-gyu drew an enthusiastic response from the public by producing "Arirang," a cinematic protest against Japanese oppression.

After the Korean War in 1953, the local film grew gradually and enjoyed a booming business for about a decade. But the next two decades saw a stagnation of the industry due largely to the rapid growth of television.

Since the early 1980s, however, the film industry has regained some vitality, thanks mainly to a few talented young directors who boldly discarded old stereotypes in movie making. Their efforts succeeded and their movies have earned recognition at various international festival including Cannes, Chicago, Berlin, Venice, London, Tokyo, Moscow and other cities. This positive trend accelerated in the 1990s with more and more Korean directors producing movies that have moved the hearts of world citizens based on unique Korean experiences and sentiments.

In 2000, "Chunhyangjeon" (the story of Chunhyang), directed by Im Kown-taek, became the first Korean film to compete in the Cannes Film Festival. Four other films were screened in non-competitive categories. The film "Seom" ("Island"), directed by Kim Ki-duk, competed in the Venice International Film Festival.

Following these films, in 2001, "Joint Security Area" was selected to compete in the Berlin International Film Festival and another film by Kim Ki-duk, "Address Unknown" entered the competition section of the Venice International Film Festival.

Director Park Chan-wook garnered the Jury Grand Prix at the Cannes in 2004 for his film "Old Boy." He also won the Best Director Award at the Bangkok International Film Festival for "Old Boy" in 2005 and "Sympathy for Lady Vengeance" in 2006.

Public interest in films has been mounting and several international film festivals have been staged by provincial governments or private organizations in Korea. They include the Pusan International Film Festival, the Bucheon International Fantastic Film Festival, the Jeonju International Fantastic Film Festival and the Women's Film Festival in Seoul.

As in other countries, Korean cinema circles are seeing noticeable expansion of the animation and cartoon industry. More than 200 companies are producing works in this up-to-date genre.

The film, video, animation and online content industries are also undergoing a boom in Korea, fueled by the availability of high-speed Internet services.

In 2003, Korea's film industry experienced great success at the box office. The market share of local films was over 53.5 percent due to several Korean blockbusters. In the same year, Korea released 240 films and movie theaters showed 65 Korean-made films.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
congratulates
the
Republic of Korea
on the
occasion
of its
National Day

An unwavering victory

From the creation of its first ever automobile, Pony, in the 1960's, Hyundai has turned into a mega enterprise, spawning countless innovations that have garnered significant market acceptance worldwide. Among them is Hyundai's CRDI, or the Common Rail Direct Injection engine, which has successfully redefined the standard for diesel engines with its fuel-efficient performance, cleaner emission quality, and improved longevity with less noise, vibration and harshness.

Taking cue from the market's clamor for sophisticated styling and safety, Hyundai dared to go beyond the convention with its "Innovations for Humanity"—automobiles that have earned global appeal and recognition. These include the Getz, an ultra-trendy compact car with a fun-to-drive feel; the Santa Fe with its off-road ruggedness and versatility; the Matrix with its flexible layout and practical design; the Starex—a classic favorite that provides optimum functionality for families and entrepreneurs alike; the Tucson with a muscled-up stance fit for the adventurer; the Coupe with its smooth power and superb sporty driveability; the Sonata, endowed with the sheer symphony of elegance and technology; the Accent, that ushers a liberty of space and convenience with its class-leading creature comforts; and the Azera, a car that makes executive class a bold statement with its premium styling and engine power.

HARI: Hyundai in a whole new light

Here in the Philippines, the remarkable dedication of HARI or Hyundai Asia Resources, Inc., is the driving force that enables Hyundai's badge of quality and technology to shine as strongly as Korea's own legacy. As the official distributor of Hyundai vehicles in the Philippines, HARI has reinforced Hyundai's upward momentum as a global competitive player through strategic image-building, marketing, and dealership enhancement efforts. Its campaign about the CRDi in 2004 has made CRDi synonymous with Hyundai, positioning it as a leader in diesel engine technology. This, coupled with CRDi-equipped vehicles such as the Getz, the Accent and even the Tucson, favorably gained wide acceptance of the Hyundai brand and the succeeding variety of vehicles it launched, including the Santa Fe, Elantra, Veracruz, Coupe, and the recently unveiled Grand Starex.

Barely six years in operation, HARI has already hit its target market share of 5% in 2005, remarkably increasing its 2004 sales performance by as much as 103%. Now, Hyundai is Top 5 among the 23 competing brands in the Philippine automotive industry.

Even its counterparts worldwide has given their nod of approval to HARI, as 11 of its dealerships has been bestowed with the Hyundai Elite award by Hyundai Motor Company in 2006, making HARI the DEP (Dealer Enhancement Program) capital of Hyundai's global community. With its remarkable share of notable achievements and recognition, HARI serves as a shining example of the Hyundai brand of quality, borne of the equally brilliant legacy of Korea.

As Korea celebrates its National Foundation Day, HARI is one with Hyundai Motor Company (HMC) in honoring the milestones of the Korean nation and its invaluable contributions to the world.

In its official letter to Mr. Mong-Koo Chung, Chairman and CEO of Hyundai Motor Company, Ms. Maria Fe Perez-Agudo, EVP and COO of HARI, expressed her warmest gratitude for the opportunity to be Hyundai's partner in the growth and success of the Hyundai brand in the country.

With a country effervescent with dynamic culture and a name beaming with confidence, expect Korea and Hyundai to shine on even more intensely as they light the path to an exciting new future.

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"Hall of Fame: Class 14 Multi-Purpose Vehicle"
- March 2007 C! Magazine Editor's Pick
"Full-size Van"
- 2006 AutoFocus People's Choice Award
"Van of the Year"
- 2004 Car of the Year Awards, Philippines

TUCSON
"Most Ideal Compact Crossover SUV"
- 2007 AutoPacific Ideal Vehicle Awards
"Highest Ranked Compact Multi-Activity Vehicle"
- 2006 J.D. Power and Associates Initial Quality Study
"Best Small SUV Ownership Experience"
- 2006 Strategic Vision's Total Value Award (TM)
"Highest Ranked in Small SUV Category"
- 2005 Strategic Vision's Total Quality Study
"Industry's Highest Quality All-New Model"
- 2005 J.D. Power and Associates Initial Quality Study
"Winner in the Compact SUV Category"
- 2005 AutoPacific Vehicle Satisfaction Awards
"Best New Crossover"
- 2005 Canadian Car of the Year Awards

SONATA
"Most Ideal Premium Mid-Size Car"
- 2007 AutoPacific Ideal Vehicle Awards
"Most Dependable Sedan of the year"
- 2006 Road and Travel Magazine, USA
"The Executive Car of the Year"
- 2006 Business Standard Motoring, India
"Best Family Sedan"
- MotorWeek's 2006 Drivers' Choice Awards, USA
"AutoPacific Ideal Vehicle Awards"
- 2006 Premium Mid-size Car
"Excellence for Automotive Safety"
- 2005 Popular Mechanics Magazine

Getz
"Best Sub-Compact Sedan"
- 2005 Car of the Year Philippines
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Contributor to the country's development goals

'Korea has been increasing its participation in international development and cooperation through its Official Development Assistance (ODA) with Philippines as a priority'

History of Korean Official Development Assistance

After World War II until 1999, the Republic of Korea was itself a recipient of international aid that helped further its development goals. The assistance had a critical role of helping Korea realize the economic miracle which it now enjoys. Having achieved its own development, Korea joins the efforts of the international community to provide humanitarian aid to the least developed countries by extending its own resources to their development programs.

In the 1980s, the Korean government designed a program for the purpose of sharing its experiences of rapid and dynamic development based on the spirit of South-South cooperation. The Economic Development Cooperation Fund (EDCF) was created by the Korean government in 1987 to provide loans to developing countries. In 1991, the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) was organized to manage grant aid and technical cooperation programs.

Even if the Government of the Republic of Korea has sought to utilize its limited resources wisely in terms of selection and concentration, it has prioritized the Philippines for its ODA program.

EDCF in the Philippines

The Republic of Korea established the Economic Development Cooperation Fund (EDCF) in 1987 for the purpose of promoting economic cooperation between Korea and developing countries. The EDCF assists developing countries by providing the necessary funding for their industrial development and economic stability. From 1987 to 2006, the EDCF loan commitments have reached US$131 million for 7 projects.

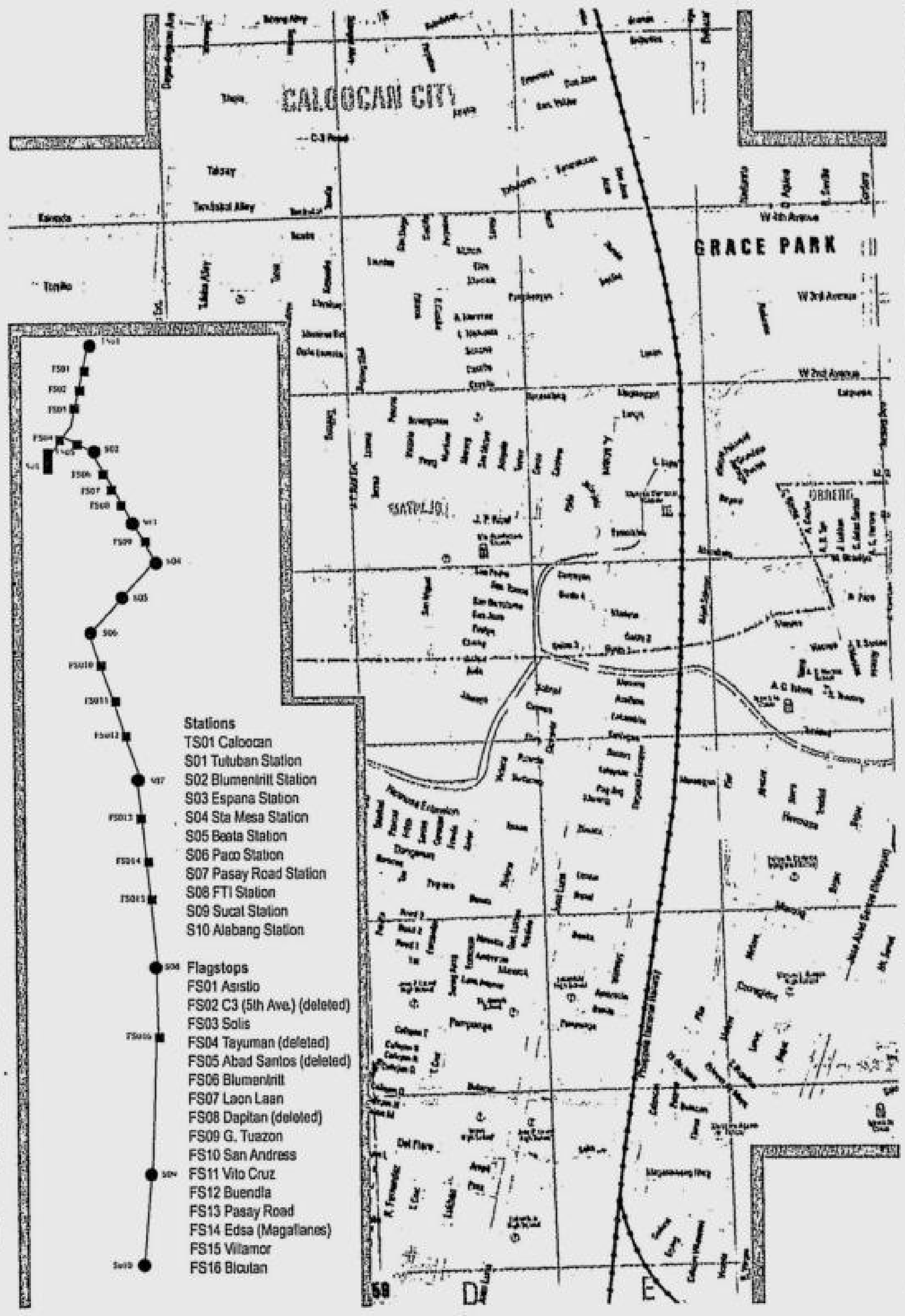
While the overarching mission of Korean assistance to the Philippines is poverty reduction and economic development, the direction for Korea's EDCF assistance to the Philippines has been focused on areas where Korea has been traditionally competitive. As such, transportation, the environment, e-Governance, and health have been the sectors of EDCF interest. Some of these projects include:

- **Northrail and Southrail Linkage Project**

The ground breaking of the Project commenced on 1 July 2007 to alleviate the worsening traffic situation, decongest Metro Manila and provide fast, safe, comfortable and affordable mode of mass transport to the commuters.

Korea will contribute US$50.4 million: US$5 million of which shall be sourced from EDCF and US$15.4 million from Export Credit Loan of Korea Eximbank. The project consists of two phases: from Caloocan to Alabang (34 kms) for Phase I and from Alabang to Calamba (26 kms) for Phase II.

Upon the completion of the Project by 2010, the average travel time from Caloocan to Calamba is estimated at one hour, with train speed of about 58 kph.



'Through KOICA, the Korean Government has initiated assistance to the Philippines by sending Filipinos for training in Korea'

KOREAN priority projects in the country include the Northrail and Southrail Linkage project that will make train travel from Caloocan to Calamba run for just an hour (center); Overseas Volunteers conducting mobile clinic (above right); Korea Busuanga (Coron) Airport Development (below); and Gapan-San Fernando-Olongapo Road Project.

- **Gapan-San Fernando-Olangapo Road Project**

The Korean government committed to support the project that will cost about US $40 million to relieve the traffic problem along the main trunk of the road system that services the provinces of Pampanga, Bataan and Zambales.

The project scope is the widening of 34.7 km of road from Dolores Flyover to Dinalupihan, including the reconstruction of Sta. Cruz Bridge and dredging of Porac-Gumain River.

- **Laguindingan Airport Development Project**

The project is now under a financing plan adjustment and bidding procedure for civil works contractor. Korea will extend US$93.4 million: US$30.6 million from EDCF and US $62.8 million from Export Credit Loan of Korea Eximbank.

Although the Cagayan de Oro-Iligan Corridor in North Central Mindanao is a major growth area in Mindanao, there are only two commercial airports in the region.

As such, the project to upgrade the airport into an international airport will greatly contribute to the economic development and tourism of Northern Mindanao.

The country office of the EDCF was established here in Metro Manila in March in anticipation of the increase of Korea's EDCF assistance to the Philippines. From 2007 to 2009, the Government of Korea has undertaken to increase EDCF assistance to the Philippines to US$400 million. Future projects which have gained EDCF support are the Gapan-San Fernando-Olongapo Road Phase II, the Bacolod Silay Airport Access Road and the Subic Bay Water Supply and Water Treatment Project.

KOICA in the Philippines

KOICA was established by the Korean Government in 1991 to implement its bilateral Grant Aid and Technical Cooperation policies. Grant aid includes project aid, disaster relief and support to NGOs; while Technical Cooperation is composed of training, expertise sharing, overseas volunteers, and development studies.

Through KOICA, the Korean Government has initiated assistance to the Philippines by sending Filipinos for training in Korea. In December 1994, the KOICA-Philippine Office was formally established to directly implement the development assistance of Korea to the Philippines.

Some of KOICA's completed and ongoing projects are:

- **Korea-Philippines Vocational Training Center (KPVTC)**

The US$5 million-funded KPVTC in Tibungco, Davao City was constructed in 2005 to establish a systematic and technical training infrastructure in Mindanao. KPVTC is made up of seven (7) engineering departments which offer training areas in agricultural machinery, automotive maintenance and repair, welding and plumbing, refrigeration and air-conditioning, food processing, etc. to train agricultural professionals, technicians, and agriculture-based workers.

- **Korea-Philippines IT Training Centers (KPITTC)**

Located at the Quezon City Polytechnic University compound in Novaliches, Quezon City and its extension facility at the Regional Skills Development Center in Guiguinto, Bulacan, KPITTCs were established under a US$5 million grant: US$4.3 million for the Quezon City site and US$0.7 million for the Bulacan site.

The Center was inaugurated last December 2005 and offers courses on software development, 2D and 3D animation development, AutoCAD, hardware management and other strategic IT fields.

Since its inauguration, 727 students graduated from KPITTC. At present, there are 1,084 students enrolled in short-term IT courses offered in the center.

- **Korea-Philippines Friendship Hospital (KPFH) - 1st and 2nd Phases**

This 100-bed maternity and children's hospital was inaugurated in 2002 in Trece Martirez City with US$3.8 million budget in response to the need for additional medical facility in Cavite Province. An extension clinic in Cavite Export Processing Zone (CEPZ) was likewise built to provide accessible and affordable medical assistance to nearby communities.

This year, the KOICA Philippine Office has given an additional budget of US$1 million to implement the 2nd Phase of KPFH by constructing a Medical Arts Building (MAB) and improving the existing hospital building and facilities.

- **Project for Early Warning and Monitoring System for Disaster Mitigation**

With project sites (river basins) in the Provinces of Aurora, Iloilo and Lanao, this project establishes proper weather and flood forecasting model for early warning and monitoring system by installing weather equipment such as automatic weather stations, rain and water level gauges, and evaporation pans and communication links to the three sites.

The Korean Government will provide US$1 million for two years (2007-2008), of which US$700,000 will be for the provision of the equipment, while US$300,000 will be for technical cooperation.

- **Project for Construction of Modern Integrated Rice Processing and Milling Complex (RPC)**

KOICA has allocated US$2.3 million for the construction of the integrated RPC in Baler, Aurora Province with state-of-the-art post harvest facilities and scientific mechanized rice production technologies aimed to enhance the international competitiveness of rice produced in the Philippines, as well as maximize the benefit to farmers for food security and poverty alleviation.

- **Project for Busuanga (Coron) Airport Development**

Facilitated through a US$3 million grant from the Korean Government through KOICA, this rehabilitation project aims to upgrade the existing facilities of the airport to cope with the expected increase in air travel demand and enhance the operational safety of aircraft operation in accordance with international civil aviation standards and recommended practices.

- **Training**

The training program, among the means of technical cooperation that KOICA performs, is a flagship program that supports the human resource development of developing countries by transferring Korea's development know-how and strategies. To this end, KOICA invites researchers, technicians and policy decision makers from partner countries to Korea for training. There have been 1,284 Filipino scholars who have been trained under this program since 1991.

- **Dispatch of Korea Overseas Volunteers (KOVs)**

The KOV program promotes technical manpower development and the transfer of advanced technology by deploying Korean volunteers to live and work together with local communities in the developing world.

In the Philippines, 77 KOVs are currently assigned to different local areas.

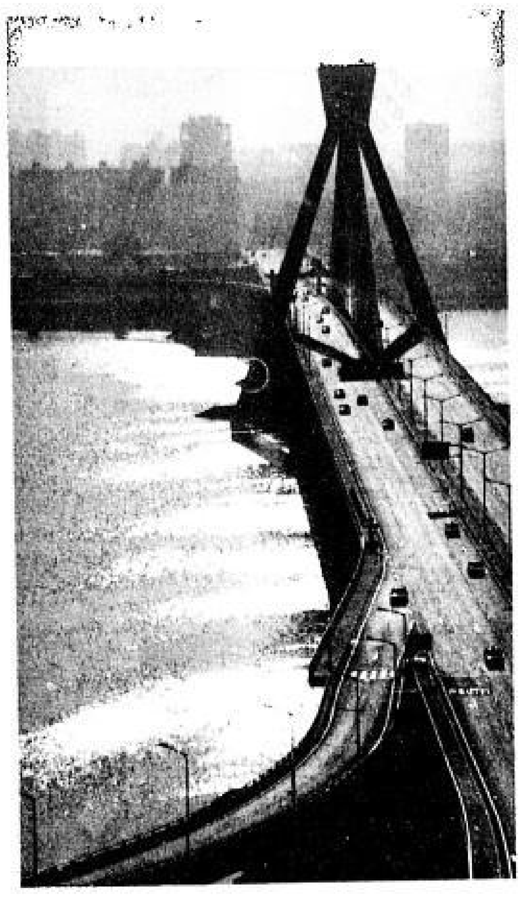
- **Disaster relief**

The Korean Government, through the Embassy and the KOICA-Philippine Office, has provided relief and rehabilitation assistance (cash donation, relief supplies, heavy equipment and vehicles) to the people affected by the recent typhoons and landslides in the Philippines. In 2006, the Korean Government donated US $1,150,000 to victims of natural disasters. This year, it will donate US$100,000 to the World Health Organization (WHO) for the organization's disaster assistance to victims of typhoons in Albay and Camarines Sur.

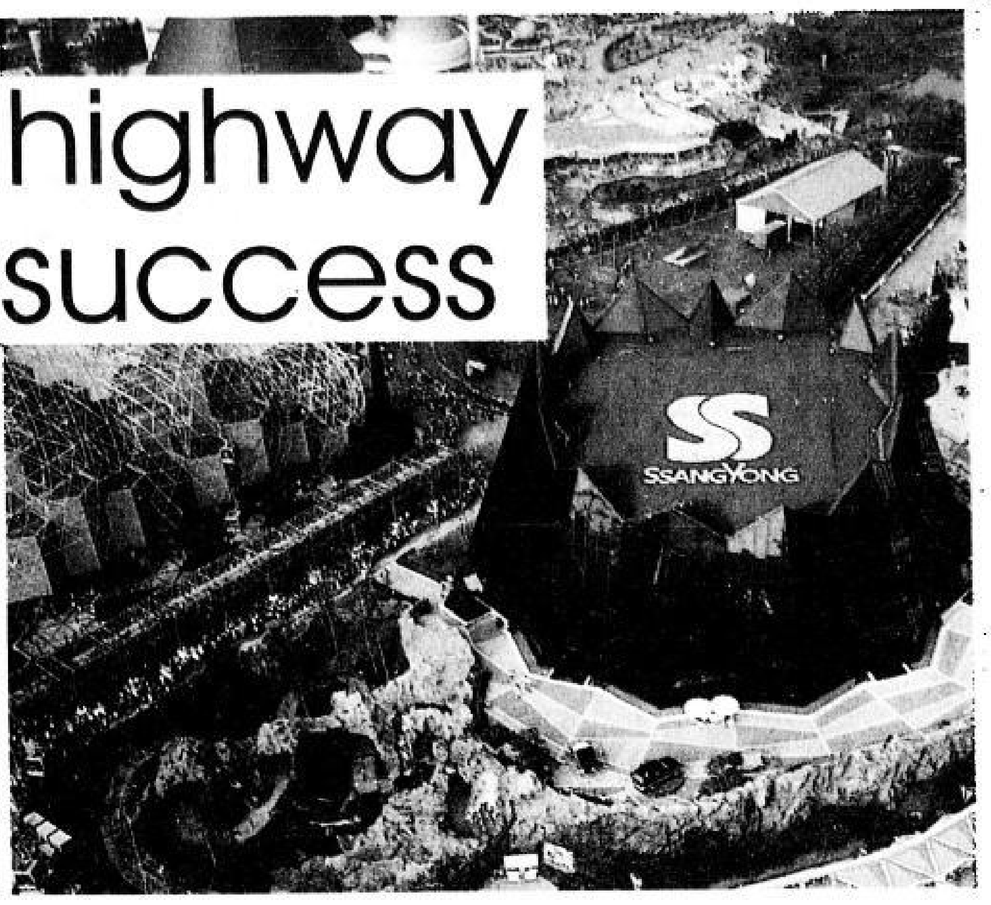
To date, Korea has extended a total of US$34 million to the Philippines in government grants to be mostly used in the expansion of infrastructure in the country.

Direction of Korean ODA

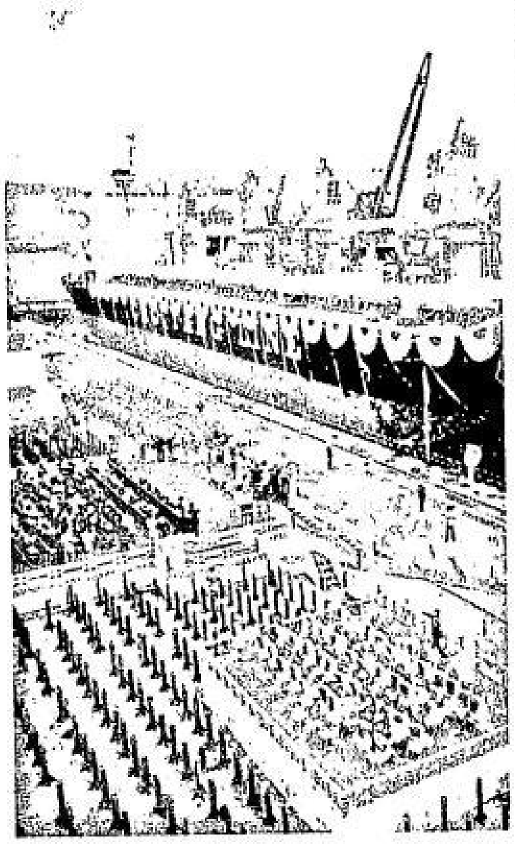
Because it is one of the most successful models of international development cooperation, Korea believes that it is now in the best position to share its own country experiences to the Philippines. As such, Korea remains sincere in its efforts to participate in the country development plan of the Philippines with the end in view of capacitating Filipinos towards the latter's own road to development.



Korea's super highway to economic success



'As the world's 11th economic power, Korea has successfully experienced impressive economic growth that its key industries have garnered recognition in the global arena'



WHAT WOULD CONSUMERS' LIFE the world over be like without famous Korean global brands like Samsung, LG Electronics, Kia, Daewoo, and Hyundai?

Once known as one of the world's poorest agrarian societies, Korea has undertaken economic development in earnest since 1962. In less than four decades, it achieved what has become known as the "Miracle on the Hangang River"—an incredible process that dramatically transformed the Korean economy while making a turning point in Korea's history.

An outward-oriented economic development strategy, which used exports as the engine of growth, contributed greatly to the radical economic transformation of Korea. Based on such a strategy, many successful development programs were implemented. As a result, from 1962 to 2006, Korea's Gross National Income (GNI) increased from US$2.3 billion to US$887.3 billion, with its per capita GNI soaring from $87 to about $18,372. These impressive figures clearly indicate the magnitude of success that these economic programs have brought about.

Korean imports have steadily increased thanks to the nation's liberalization policy and increasing per capita income levels. As one of the largest import markets in the world, the volume of Korea's imports exceeded those of China in 1995 and were comparable to the imports of Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines combined.

Major import items included industrial raw materials such as crude oil and natural minerals, general consumer products, foodstuffs and goods such as machinery, electronic equipment and transportation equipment.

Korea developed rapidly from the 1960s, fueled by high savings and investment rates, and a strong emphasis on education. The nation became the 29th member country of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in 1996.

As the world's 12th largest economy, Korea is working to become the focal point of a powerful Asian economic bloc during the 21st century. In 2006, Korea's trade volume amounted to US$635 billion, ranking 11th in the world. Korea also has the fourth largest foreign reserves. Despite high oil prices, the strong Korean currency and rising raw material prices, the Korean economy is growing at a healthy pace.

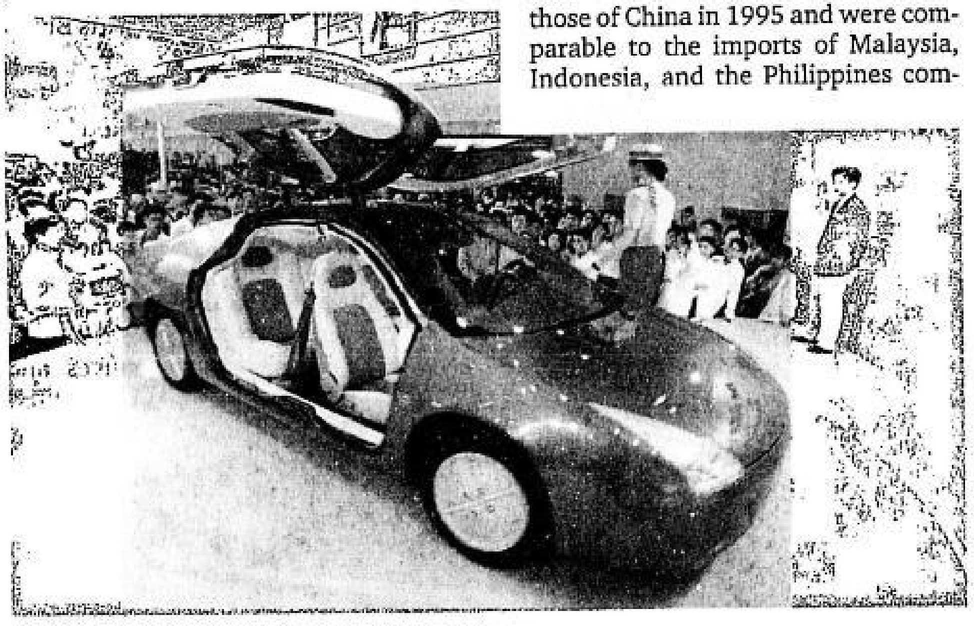
Sustaining Korea's economic growth are key industries that have garnered recognition in the global arena. Korea is the largest shipbuilding nation; for semiconductors, the third largest; digital electronics, the fourth. Korean textile, steel and petrochemicals are fifth in terms of volume, and automobiles are sixth in the world. Korea's shipbuilding sector has been the industry leader for the past three years, accounting to 40 percent of the world's total shipbuilding orders of 2006.

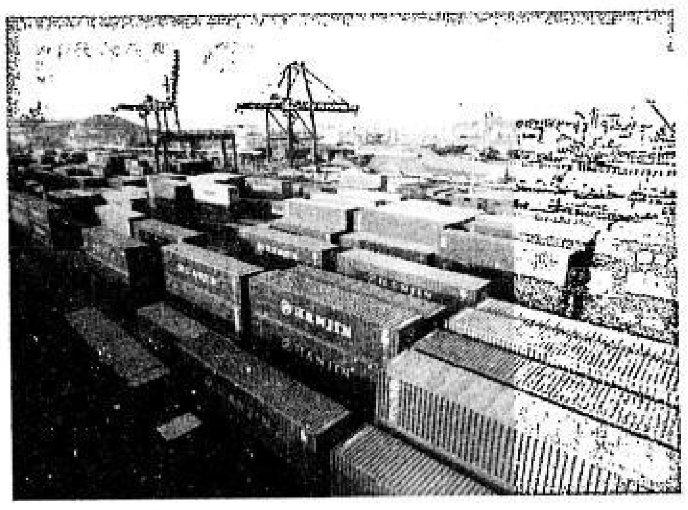
As a major auto manufacturer, Korea produces over 3 million vehicles annually. Since Korea first started exporting cars in 1976, the nation's auto industry has developed at a remarkable speed. Riding on the increased popularity of Korean automobiles all over the world, leading Korean car companies have begun extending manufacturing bases to overseas locations.

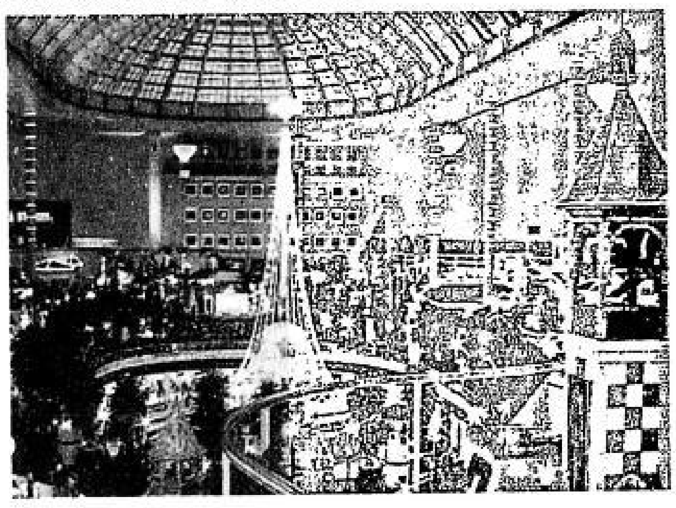
With almost 11 percent of the global market share, Korea's semiconductor sector is at the forefront of the industry, particularly in terms of flash memory and SOC (System on a Chip). As of 2004, Korea's DRAM (Dynamic Random Access Memory) ranked first in the world, with a 47.1-percent market share.

Since 2000, innovation has topped the national agenda. To bring about more innovation into the industries, Korea is promoting business-friendly policies, as well as policies enhancing cooperation between large companies and SMEs.

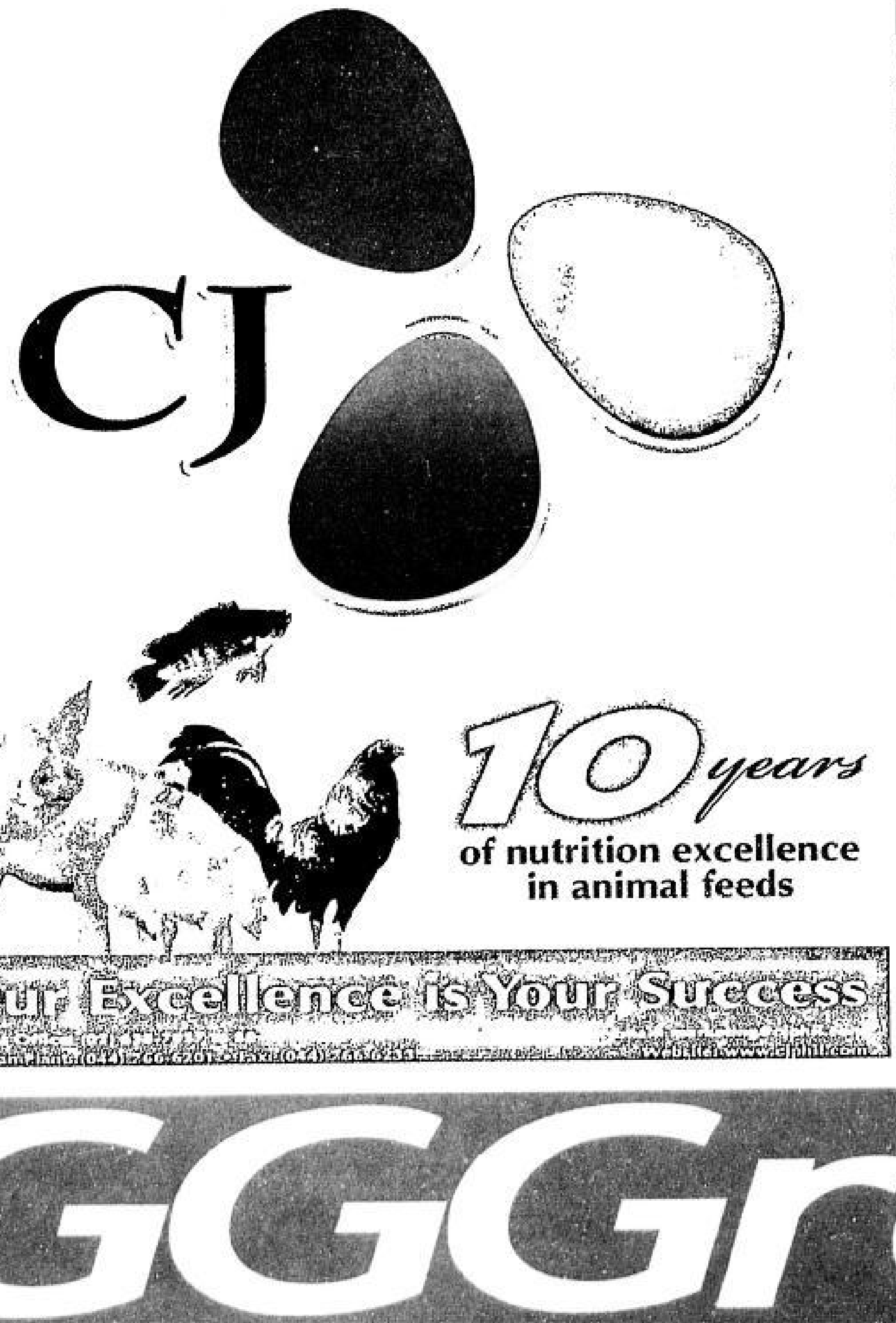
Having undergone spectacular growth in a relatively short period of time, the Korean government is now focusing on the "quality of growth." To this aim, Korea envisions three pillars of future growth: growth that fosters job creation, growth that fuels innovation in industries, and growth that brings balanced development among the provinces as well as metropolitan areas and among companies large and small.







> 'Having undergone spectacular growth in a relatively short period of time, the Korean government is now focusing on the 'quality of growth.' To this aim, Korea envisions three pillars of future growth'



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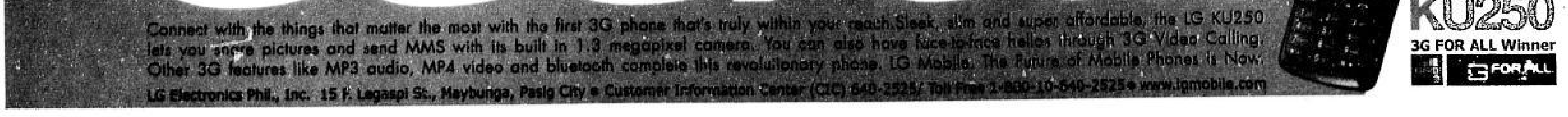

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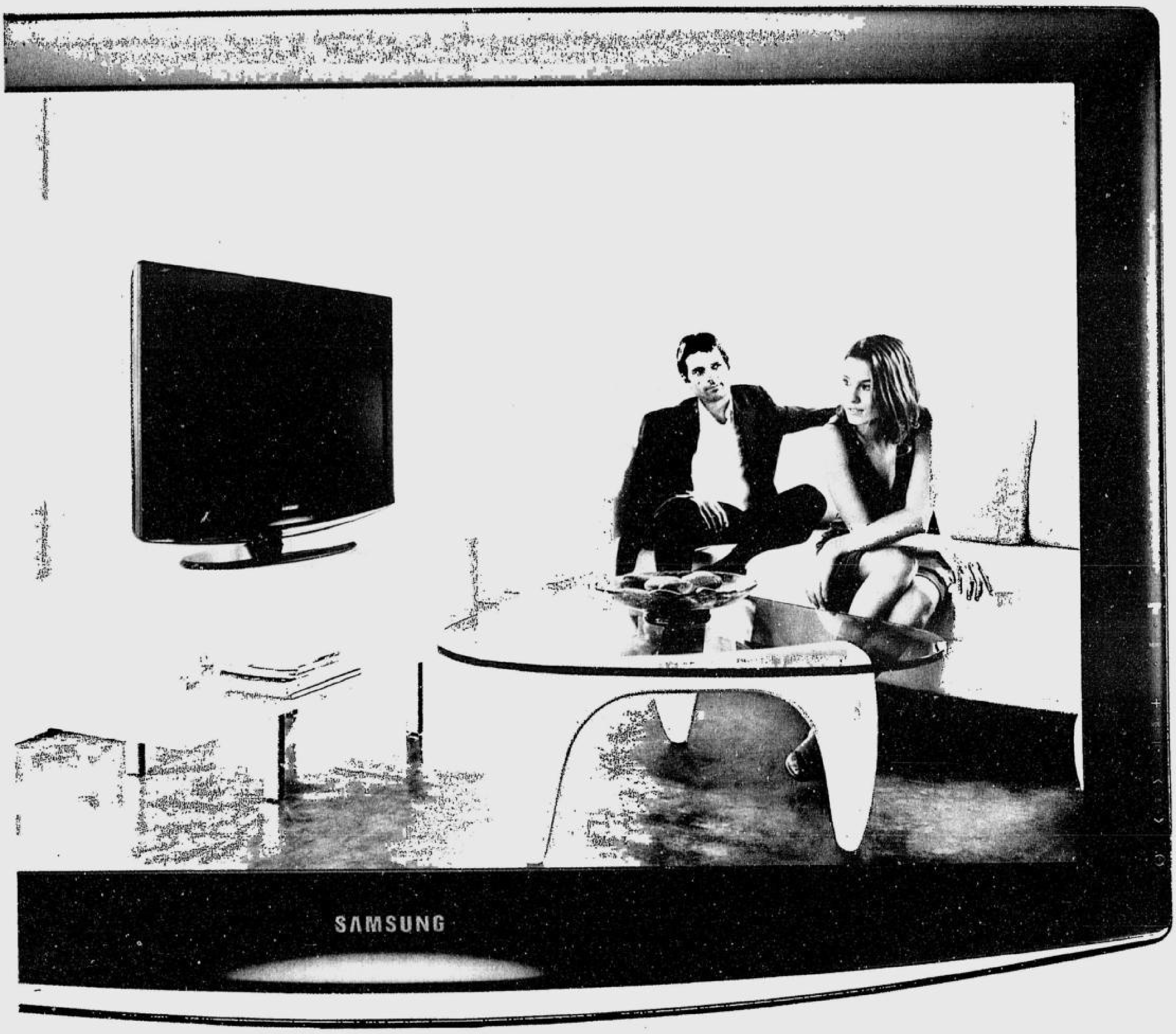

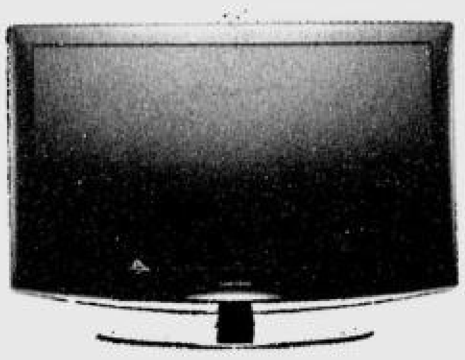

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